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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Prolegomena to a Theory of Working Class Culture: Organizational, Political, and Ideological Praxis of the Alberta Federation of Labour, 1979-1986.

(C)

BY

KONSTANTINOS KOSKINAS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1987

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This thesis is dedicated to the struggles of the working class for a humane future,

and

to the 75th Anniversary of the Alberta Federation of Labour.

ABSTRACT

The present study is an early attempt to theoretically understand and interpret, from an historical and dialectical perspective, the working class culture of Alberta labour as it has been manifested in the praxis of the province's Federation of Labour, (AFL) chiefly during the 1979-1986 historical period.

The basic purpose of the study was to consider the effects of the impact that the new Alberta conditions had upon the culture of the AFL, as well as the response of the AFL to the changing conditions. Two basic questions were asked: (1.) How the participants in the activities of the AFL produced their's and the Federation's working class culture; (2.) what kind of working class culture did the AFL produced?

The evidence provides significant support to a number of important theoretical assumptions of the perspective used in this thesis. As the 1986 strike at the Gainer meat-plant has vividly demonstrated, the working class culture of the AFL is mostly a result of labour's emancipatory appropriation of its collective past in the form of a partial transcendence of its class boundaries.

Further, the case study shows that the historical course of the AFL's cultural development is a non-linear and uneven phenomenon. At the present time the AFL's cultural development especially since 1983, has entered a new stage. It is mostly characterized by a rebirth of militancy and politicalization of the AFL. A number of indications are suggesting a possible emergence of a radical working class consciousness that at the present time appears in an elementary and unstable form..

Finally, the impact of the sociohistorical context especially the economic and the political crisis of the 1980's had a negative effect upon the living standards of Alberta's labour. These effects appear, in the final analysis, as the most important factors in the changing of the AFL's culture from one that was mostly based upon class collaboration and consensus to one which increasingly has become oriented towards class confrontation and struggle.

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Finally, I would like to say that this thesis would not have been possible without the total contribution and dedication of my companion in life and struggle, Demetra, who in fact became completely involved in its production after she had just completed her own. During this last year, she took upon herself our family's burden in order to provide me with the most possible adequate working and living conditions. Thank you.

For my daughter Ifigenia-Irene I can only say that her tolerance, encouragement and invaluable optimism was more than significant for the completion of this thesis. I hope that this work will contribute in a small way, to a peaceful future world for her and her generation.

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I. CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.

"Here must all distrust be left;
All cowardice must be dead".
(From Dante's The Divine Comedy.
Cited in Marx, 1970:23).

In many instances literature, rather than sociology, has surprised us with its ability to provide profound and rigorous insights to the paradoxes and complexities of social life and thought. In regards to the nature and content of the problematic (that throughout this project will inform the description, analysis and interpretation of the various social phenomena and processes that are to be investigated) Herman Hesse's contemplations in the "Stepenwolf" , provide the basic premises.

In an illuminating paragraph Herman Hesse captures in a deep existential manner the dialectics of the historical processes that have shaped, to a large extent, the contemporary content and form of our everyday life, thoughts and feelings. For Hesse:

> "Human Life is reduced to real suffering, to hell, only when two ages, two cultures and two religions overlap..... There are times when a whole generation is caught in this way between two ages, two modes of life, with consequence that it loses all power to understand, no security no simple acquiescence" (Hesse cited in Konstantinov, 1981:20).

On the other hand Lenin (1913) had argued about the existence of two antagonistic and contradictory class cultures in civil society: a dominant bourgeois culture and a socialist one (Lenin, 1983:114).

The two cultures theory that has been presented here in its "experiencial", social-psychological form by Hesse and in its "political sociological" expressed by Lenin, has in recent years (some times explicitly, most of the times implicitly), come to the front of sociological debate. Along with the epistemological and ontological questions, in regards to the conceptualization and comprehension of the ideas of "culture" in general, and along with the re-stated interest in the theoretical and methodological understanding of working class and of the idea of class in general, the "two cultures" theory appears as the probable "hidden link" that might provide us with a better understanding of the way culture is related to class.

The Marxist schools of social thought have, at large, been more concerned and responsible for the renewal of the sociological interest on questions and issues centered around the concepts of class and culture. It seems then self-evident to argue that some kind of relation must exist between the revival of Marxist discourse and the concerns about class and culture, that have developed within the discipline of sociology.

In regards to the new directions developing within society -and as a result reflected in the concerns of the discipline- they can be perceived and rationalized as products of: a) the deep and devastating (for an ever increasing number of people) changes and crises that have swept the capitalist world. They have appeared as results and products of militarization of social life; of the ever increasing exploitation of human and natural resourses; and in the sharpening of societal problems and personal sufferings. b) The increase of the industrial mobilization of working class, and the intensification of class struggle and societal polarization between capital and labour which comes as a result of the neo-conservative and monetaristic policies, as well as of the failure of liberal and social democracy to formulate effective and fundamental changes in the capitalist system. In conjunction with that, the welfare state has become less effective and has entered a stage of collapse. c) Finally there is the inability and the failure of the dominant perspectives in the discipline - that fall under the categorizations of metaphysics, idealism, positivism, structural-functionalism, and empiricism - to continue to provide adequate alternative directions for social theory and action.

Taking into consideration the divisions that characterize the social 'being' and 'consciousness' in the civil society, the model of "two cultures" is not to be perceived as a mere theoretical construct. Aside from its abstract qualities it is perceived as a living reality of a universal and total character. Its origins are not to be found in the logico-ideological reflections of individuals but in the historical whirlpool of social life.

The working class movement, since the end of World War II in the advanced capitalist societies, went through a dialectically united but contradictory course of development. First, it went through a process of defeat and retreat, and second, through a process of relatively smooth evolutionary development, by sharing the fruits of the system's growth, and by

functioning within the context of the institutionalized collective bargaining processes and the wide spread implementation of parliamentary democracy. Labour struggles therefore, in general, took a mild form, at the same time theat the revolt of the "socially aware" who were located outside of the immediacy of the class struggle emerged (Hardach et al, 1978:63).

Thus, Marxian thought, since 1960's, especially within the academic circles of the west, became centered around the perception that,

> "the historical limit of capitalism is not a question of the dynamics of social classes and the class struggle, but a question of moral appeals and of reasonable reflection by rational individuals" (ibid:62).

This thesis would eventually become the basis for Habermas (1976) theory of communication. On the other hand the working class movement and its culture were theoretically rationalized by the New-Left intellectual radicals as being "de-radicalized" and "de-revolutionarized" -a process which was a result of the institutionalization of industrial conflict within the system (Dahrendorf, 1959; Marcuse, 1969; Giddens, 1972; Mann, 1973). This institutionalization, seemed to be the outcome of the emergence of the "affluent society" and the "affluent worker". The latter eventually became "privatized", and in relation to that the working class as a whole was "embourgeoisified" (Galbraith, 1969; Golthrope, 1968; Lockwood, 1963, 1975). Further, due to the impact of technological development, revolution was replaced by reform, and an "end of ideology" was predicted (Lipset, 1963; Bell, 1960).

The broader theoretical context for this argument was constructed upon two basic ideas, which first claimed that along with the expansion of commodity production and the emergence of consumer society, in which the state intervenes in the production and distribution at an increasing rate, the fetischism of commodity has created a "reified" illusory class consciousness; and that, second, civil society and the state became integrated as a result of the increasing intervention of the latter upon the former within the system. (Lukacs, 1983; Gramsci, 1980).

Working class culture therefore, either as a mode of life or as a mode of struggle, was to be recognized only within the premises of civil society, and as a general contributor to its cultural development (Williams, 1961, 1963; Thompson, 1982). However, as Panitch argues

within the crisis conditions of the 1980's, the re-emergence of working class militancy was "helping (the theoreticians) to identify the significant problems." The development of a Marxist theory of working class culture based on antagonistic opposition to civil society as a whole becomes a possibility. (Panitch, 1979)

Under these circumstances, a project that intends to examine working class culture in an advanced capitalist society must consider two interrelated processes: historical materialism, and the dialectical method. These are the theoretical and methodological framework of the present study.

First, a demystification of the classical Marxist theory of working class culture will be attempted, based upon the dynamics of class struggle. Second, a concrete investigation of a particular case of working class culture in an advanced capitalist society will follow.

Theoretically then, it is assumed that the above outlined approach will develop a general understanding of how a working class produces and reproduces itself culturally within the civil society of an advanced capitalist country. Further, it is intended to allow the identification of what kind of culture the working class produces and reproduces in its course of struggle within the civil society.

The overall nature, of the project is based on theory and explanation-building. This involves the re-examination of the validity and reliability of the general theoretical propositions of the materialist conception of history and of the dialectical method. Within this theoretical and methodological context, however, there are two more pre-occupations to be considered.

First, as the actual historical context of the case study is Canada and particularly Alberta, it is pressupposed that working class culture and class culture in general, are both products and producers of their historical context. Canada has produced an "unevenly developed and dependent capitalist economy" (Panitch, 1979:vii) that operates within the international framework of imperialist development. In regards to Alberta uneven development is a particular manifestation of the regional disparities that exist in the country. Thus, Alberta located in the periphery of capitalist development of Canadian capitalism, is

subject to the processes originated in the metropolitan centers of the country. This tends to place the province in a dependent and consequently underdeveloped condition (Davis, 1971).

Within the national and international context Alberta's capitalist development is dependent upon the industrial production and export of one or very few staples, mainly oil since the 1940's. There is a monopoly competition between international, national, and provincial agents for control of oil industry. This kind of development results in economic -

> "boom-and-bust, over-expansion in some sectors accompanied by under-expansion in others, urban blight, and the degradation of the environment. The benefits will accrue mainly to the new bourgeoisie. The working class, the farmers, and large sections of the middle class will receive at the very most a few crumbs" (Shaffer, 1984: 190).

Within this context, the state in Alberta has been called to intervene increasingly in order to regulate monopoly competition, and its social and political effects. In that sense the Alberta state has played a "province-building role" which has produced an "economic nationalism" that

> "reflects the desire of a peripheral political, cultural or ethnic group to posess and enjoy an industrial core of its own where wealth, attractive carreers, and power are located" (Pratt, 1984:219).

The ultimate goal of the "economic nationalism" that has been supported by the state in Alberta, is,

> "to transform this division of labour (between hitherland and metropolis) through industrialization and to transform its territorial base into a relatively independent core". (ibid:219).

Alberta's state interventionism and economic nationalism represent,

> "[the]policies [and] reflect the anxieties and aspirations of a dependent business community and an ascendent urban middle class, neither of which seeks the elimination of the market economy, merely promotion within it" (ibid:220).

As Macpherson has observed,

> "the Alberta petite bourgeoisie supported a strong state with a view to protecting itself against big eastern capital, but because of the strength of its commitment to private property in an age of monopoly capitalism it found the state inexorably drawn into the latter's orbit" (Panitch, 1971:17).

Thus, the state monopoly arrangements in Alberta allow the bourgeoisie to adopt flexible politico-economic relations on the provincial and federal level. (Shaffer, 1984, 190) In that sense the bourgeoisie, on the one hand was able to resist any tendency towards the

nationalization or any federal control over the oil industry (ibid:190). On the other hand they accepted the nationalistic compromizing initiative undertaken by the Canadian state, which acted as the collective agent of the capitalist interest in the provinces, and managed to bring them into agreement to further secure capitalism in Canadian society (Panitch, 1979:10).

The second preoccupation refers to the overall uniqueness of the Canadian labour movement and of the working class politics operating within the context of North American imperialist development of capitalism. First of all the existence of a third social democratic party the (NDP), with which the organized labour movement is strongly affiliated, along with the initial concentration of Canadian workers in the industries of production and export of staples, provides a better opportunity for resistance and opposition to capital , compared, for example, with the labour movement in the U.S.A. Thus,

> "the Canadian labour movement was one of the few in the western world that turned down participation in a voluntary prices and incomes policy when it was first offered... The extent and nature of the opposition of the organized working class to the incomes policy also indicates that class conflict in this country, which has largely been expressed at the industrial level therefore, is beginning to take on an important political dimension... (as) the context of industrial militancy is beginning to lay bare the inconsistency between the apparent legal and political equality of liberal democracy, and the socio-economic inequality of a capitalism protected and maintained by the state" (Panitch, 1979: 22-23).

These two preoccupations along with the developments in the area of sociology of culture briefly discussed earlier, provide a direction to the project, in which the phenomena and processes of working class culture are understood as constituting a dialectical unity and contradiction between the mode of life and the mode of struggle of this class, reflected, expressed and manifested in general in its mode of praxis in everyday life.

To that project William's (1976) suggestion will be followed, applied in the context of working class culture, (appreciated as a system of social relations) about the need for a theoretical perception of the sociology of culture as better expressed in the sociology of signs.

> "A genuine sociology of systems of signs would be necessarily concerned, in historical and materialistic ways, with the specific technologies which are now their dominant forms, but with these technologies as systems of signs and not at an abstracted technical level. Moreover, since at this level the technologies are necessarily seen as new and advanced forms of social organization, there is a basis for reworking not only the analysis of content (which is always a content of

> relationships) but also the analysis of institutions and formations (which are never independent of) though they are equally not controlled by, the technologies around which they now characteristically form (Williams, 1976, 505-506).

Working class culture viewed from the point of its mode of praxis (within which life and struggle are dialectically united and contradict each other) allows the researcher to avoid any mechanical distinctions about the culture of a class-divided civil society.

On the other hand, the objectively defined historical movement of working class towards its total cultural realization, produces and reproduces the possibility for emancipatory appropriation of the class culture of civil society, by a new emerging society through a revolutionary rupture between the former and the latter. What then becomes the significant criterion of the different class cultural modes in the civil society is to be derived from the consideration of the dialectical unity and contradiction between the historical movement of class culture of civil society with that of the working class moving towards the opposite direction and its total cultural realization not as a class but as a new society.

The essence, however, of the different modes of class culture is in fact, constituted by antithetical and contradictory tendencies, processes, and phenomena, found in the capitalist mode of production. As such antithetical and contradictory class cultural elements are both shared and opposed by all the existing class cultures in a civil society. In return these cultural patterns are expected to be reproduced within the institutionalized forms of appearance of the various class cultures, i.e.: politically, ideologically, aesthetically, organizationally.

The cultural hegemony of one mode of class culture upon the others is assumed to be the result of the way that the unity and contradiction between the mode of life and the mode of struggle within the civil society, is reflected, expressed and manifested in the every day praxis of the classes and their members.

Two last points have to be made in regards to the theoretical perspective and to the scope of the approach, employed in the present thesis. First, the premises of the particular perspective and the contradictions informing the project are not to be overcome by simply going beyond or above them or by introducing a middle or third way. On the contrary, the only possible way to solve the contradictions in life and thought, is through and by concrete

social and theoretical praxis.

Second, the review of a large number of academic works on the subject has indicated that there is not an equivalent contribution to the subject, like that expressed, in the present thesis. Hence, the entire project should be understood as being 'heuristic' and 'experimental' in quality.

Selection of the Case Study

The selection of the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) as the case study is done on the basis of the following four criteria.

1. The AFL, as a higher form of trade union organization in the form of a Federation, and as an umbrella representative of the majority of the organized working class in the province of Alberta, allows the researcher to better observe most of the major tendencies (historical, economic, organizational, political, ideological) that take place in the labour movement in the course of class struggle.

2. Due to the location of the AFL on the periphery of Canadian capitalism, its study allows the examination of the implications for the labour movementof the two major inherent shortcomings of capitalism are taking place: the processes of uneven development and in close relation to it, the processes of anarchic development. Both processes have played an important role in the events (unrest, revolutions) that have taken place in a number of third world countries (Baran and Sweezy, 1966; Frank, 1967; Frank, 1969; Baran, 1973).

3. It is a theory examination project, given the existence of other competing theories of working class culture. It allows the researcher the concrete and in depth examination of the major theoretical concerns of the area (Takamiya, 1978:9-12). By limiting his case study to the AFL, the researcher will attempt to thoroughly understand the main processes of its development in relation to the theoretical and methodological framework employed in the project. If such an attempt was to take place in a much wider sample population, it would be beyond the scope of the research project.

4. The specific time span was selected on the basis that this period was characterized by a deepening in the crisis of national and international capitalism -the worst since the end of World War II. It was also characterized by the failure of the welfare system to provide a solution for the increasing social problems. Finally it was characterized by a re-direction of the entire economic, political, cultural and ideological policies of the capitalist state towards neo-conservatism and monetarism.

The result was that the traditional forms of self-organization against the expansion of the capitalist mode of life have entered a period of crisis and have forced the labour movement into a process of self-reflection and political re-activation. Such a period reveals many contradictions

Methods in Data Collection.

Dialectical and historical materialism starts with the assumption that the analysis of social phenomena should be based upon the real conditions of individuals living within a given mode of production (Marx and Engels, 1976:42). It further assumes that the broadly defined economic aspect of a society is the most important sphere of social intercourse (Marx, 1970:20-21); and that class is the political criterion by which the praxis of individuals takes place. (Engels. Cited in Hoffman, 1975:129) Social praxis is the ground for the testing and evaluation of every idea or thought (Marx and Engels, 1976:34).

Classical Marxism in the analysis of the sociohistorical reality follows the dialectical process of deduction/induction. Therefore, it moves from the abstract to the concrete and and then back to the abstract. Hence, only then it is enriched by the real and concrete information that describe sociohistorical reality (Marx, 1970:206). Further, the dialectical unity of macro and micro social phenomena is taken into consideration (Marx, Engels, and Lenin, 1972:11-12) .

One of the most important concepts in the theory and methodology of dialectical and historical materialism, is that of *totality* (Lukacs, 1983:27-44). The concept of totality refers both to the phenomena of cognition: i.e., the dialectical unity of the theory, method, and

praxis; and of social life. For the latter, the concept of totality presupposes that in any given historical moment the major tendencies and regularities of social development are expressed -in different degrees- in all the spheres of social and personal life (ibid.).

As far as it concerns the methods of data collection, the methodology of the dialectical and historical materialism requires:

1) a total submersion of the researcher in the phenomenon under study. For this reason *participant observation* appears as the most adequate method of data collection (Mirkovich, 1980).

2) It requires the ability of the researcher to constantly act upon his categories and classification system in order to capture a glimpse of an ever changing social reality. These changes in the categories and in the classification system become themselves an important source for scientific reflection (Lenin, 1973:Vol.38, p.253).

3) Antagonistic contradictions refer either to the past, present, and future processes and phenomena. Hence, social realities are always to be unveiled (Marx and Engels, 1976:37).

Therefore, in order to outline the main and possible features of the logic that exists behind specific historical developments, other methods of data collection are needed --documentary research, unstructured interviews and the like- so that the information collected and its meaning may be constantly verified.

Engels, in a vivid description of his "methods and procedures" of data collection in "The Condition of the Working-Class in England", explains the process:

> I have tried to lay before my German Countrymen a faithful picture of your condition (Working-men), of your sufferings and struggles, of your hopes and prospects. I have lived long enough amidst you to know something about your circumstances; I have devoted to their knowledge my most serious attention, I have studied the various official and non-official documents as far as I was able to get a hold of them-I have not been satisfied with this, I wanted more than a mere *abstract* knowledge of my subject, I wanted to see you in your own homes, to observe you in your every-day life, chat with you on your condition and grievances, to witness your struggles against the social and political power of your oppressors (Engels, 1973:9).

Therefore, and in this sense, no rigidly structured methods for collecting and classifying data are either possible or desirable. What is coming closer, as methods of data collection of dialectical and historical materialism, are the ***Unstructured Methods*** employed in

Field Research (Dean P.J., Eichhorn, Dean R.L., 1969:19-24)

Questions, then, pertaining to the ***validity*** and ***reliability*** are only 'tangential' to the nature of the study and cannot be established in any formal sense (McCall and Simmons, 1969:1-5). What we are after, then, are mainly ***analytic descriptions*** of phenomena and processes that are coming under the scope of the research project (ibid.:3 and 19). These descriptions combine both the ***fact*** and its ***meaning*** as perceived by the researcher, and by the participants in the process (ibid).

On a second level the ***interpretation*** of the analytic descriptions will take place on the basis of the methodological and theoretical principles of the dialectical and historical materialism, i.e.: the emphasis is upon the materiality of existence and the significance of the economics; the importance of praxis in cognition and change; the role of history, to name a few.

In reference to the knowledge gained through the above process, it is basically ***heuristic*** in nature. That means it refers to the way that the theory and the methodology work. Knowledge is not to be verified by empirical test, but rather by the course of the history that the evolution of the phenomenon or of the process, under examination, will follow. ***Objectivity***, therefore of the research is established on the basis of whether or not the historical course of the phenomenon and of the process is ***grasped*** and analyzed in the study.

Research Design and Kinds of Data.

The importance of the case study as a "research strategy" along with its strengths and limitations has been well documented by Yin (1984). He argues,

> "the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena. In brief the case study allows the investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events" (p. 14).

Yin defines the case study as,

> "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (ibid:23).

For Yin the case study is done basically to address three sets of questions "how, why, and what" and therefore, its nature must be explanatory, explorative and descriptive. All can be taken together or one at a time, and this will depend upon the kind of the case study (ibid:17,25). Further, the case study is concerned with contemporary events (ibid:17). In terms of its weaknesses, it has been argued that they are based upon a possible bias, a limitation to generalization, and upon the collection of "massive, unreadable documents" (ibid:21). However, Yin argues that bias concerns are faced by all research strategies, and by no means do they require the studies to be considered "unscientific". Generalizations on the other hand are not made on the population basis, but on theory and its ability to explain the various phenomena and processes (ibid). The third problem, about the extent of the collected data, is also controllable, due to the fact that collected data can be scrutinized on the basis of the different methods that are employed in the research, thus limiting their extension in addressing only the questions that have been asked (ibid:22). He concludes,

> " case study research is remarkably hard, even though case studies heve traditionally been considered to be "soft" research. Paradoxically, the "softer" a research technique, the harder it is to do" (ibid:26).

In respect to the nature of the case study, and in terms of its relation to the whole project, it can be described as an embedded single-case design aimed at explanation-building and theory-examination.

> "The single-case design is eminently justifiable under certain conditions where the case represents a critical test of existing theory, whereas the case is a rare and unique event, or whereas the case serves a revelatory purpose" (ibid:47).

In return, all three reasons might be present in a particular project. The embedded case study is preferred in this project because it involves "more than one unit of analysis", ie., the AFL as a whole, the different levels of social reality in which the AFL appears and is realised, and the individuals who are involved in the AFL. Further the embedded single-case study is used in order to "increase the sensitivity.... (to the problem) of slippage" from the original focus of inquiry (ibid:45). On the other hand, a certain degree of shift in orientation "might in fact be justifiable, but it should not come as a surprise to the investigator" (ibid:47). Furthermore, it has been argued that such flexibility might count as

"one of the strengths of the case study approach" (ibid). In order however, to control this possible problem, a constant reference to the theory and to the research questions, in their general as well as concrete and empirical manifestations in the project, is required.

Similarly the explanation-building nature of the embedded single-case study is based upon the process of "hypothesis-generation process, but its goal is not to conclude a study but to develop ideas for further study" (ibid:107). Therefore, both the theoretical and concrete arguments included in the present project, represent a set of hypotheses and proposals for further research and interpretation.

The design for the collection of the different kinds of data employed in the present project resembles to a considerable degree, the one employed by Lipset, Trow, and Coleman (1956), in their study of "Union Democracy". Thus, the culture of the AFL that represents the main unit of analysis is understood as a system of sub-units of analysis which have taken place within the practical implementations of specific programs and actions by the AFL. These programs and actions include the social (Unemployment Action Centre), organizational (AFL conventions) and political (AFL support to the Gainers strike) relations among the AFL's affiliates and the society as a whole. Finally, the individual participants in the practical realization of the different relations which constitute the totality of the AFL's culture, are perceived as the last sub-unit of analysis.

The total cultural system of the AFL is examined on the basis of data collected from the various official and unofficial documents of the AFL and about the AFL. These data include different constitutions, convention reports and resolutions, policy papers, publication and media reports. Data on the "intermediate" units of analysis of the AFL ie., the UAC, the AFL 1985 convention and the Gainers strike, were collected on the basis of observations, participant observations, interviews and discussions. Data on the individual participants were collected on the basis of open-ended, unstructured interviews.

The data collected for the AFL as a whole refer to the objective historical appearance of the Federation in contrast to their subjective understanding and interpretation by the various individuals who were interviewed. These data were about the sociohistorical context

and development of the AFL, its content (in terms of its structural organization and its political ideologies), the forms by which the AFL appears in praxis, its overall historical and cultural profile (particular modes of working class culture), and finally, about its possible future development as well as the different visions of its participants for future action.

The pattern-matching process of the objective appearance of the AFL and the subjective understanding and interpretation of it by its participants, is attempted in order to identify three sets of contradictions. First, the difference between how reality is and how it is understood, second, how reality becomes something different from what had been intented; and three, how the discontinuities and contradictions of the past practical realization of the AFL culture becomes the basis for its continuous development.

In terms of the intermediate units in the AFL's culture (which are perceived to represent the Federation in the making of its culture), three sets of pattern-matching were attempted. First, a comparison between the contradictions in the different practical involvements of the AFL (UAC, 1985 convention, and Gainers strike), were perceived as representing three different stages in the historical development of its culture. Again the element of discontinuity and continuity were examined and discussed. Second, the AFL convention was considered as representing an event where the past meets the future in the present, and therefore an assessment of the social and political reflection, expression, and manifestation of the AFL culture was done in organizational terms.

The kind of data for these two sets of comparisons were collected on the basis of each activity's particular historical background, and structural organization of the programmatic activity, the different political ideologies involved in them, the different practices employed for the realization of the various goals and the overall profile in terms of the manifested particular modes of working class culture.

In return, a third pattern-matching process could develop between the general and the concrete realization of the culture of the AFL.

These three sets of comparisons will hopefully to allow the identification of the general and specific contradictions in the cultural making of the AFL, as well as the process

and the means by which they become consciously and unconsciously resolved through and by the praxis of the AFL's participants. Finally, we hope that the recognition of the existing structural and praxial limitations and potentialities for the development of the AFL culture will become possible.

Theory verification and evaluation was done on a continuous basis, throughout the project by connecting the theoretical and general significance of the various processes and phenomena under examination to the building of an explanation about the AFL culture as a whole. Finally, in order to establish a more empirical base of comparison between the different kinds of data, a paradigmatic content analysis of the AFL's resolutions (1979-1986), was conducted and included in Appendix A. This is so, in order to avoid any confusion over the character of the project. In the content analysis however, quantitative descriptive categorization and analysis of the data was combined with the qualitative formation of categories and their interpretation following Rosengreen, Lindkvist, Andren, and Bryder (1981) suggestions for such analysis. This content analysis was attempted in order to demonstrate the qualitative changes and discontinuities in the development of the AFL culture from 1979 to 1986, which resulted from consistent and gradual changes in the way in which the participants of the AFL comprehend praxially and symbolically the effect of contextual changes upon their cultural position. Further, it was aimed to understand the nature of the AFL's response to these changes, given the structural organization and the political ideological make-up, as well as the position and the role of a trade union federation, within a larger working class and societal context.

Implications of the Case Study

This analytical process should allow, first, the understanding of the ways in which the AFL membership understands and interprets its existence both symbolically and praxially. Second, on the basis of the resolutions, an assesment of the possible forms and directions of the political ideology and the structural organization of the AFL can hopefully be developed. And third, the analysis of AFL's class culture may reveal the overall sociohistorical factors

that intervene, at the present, in the development of the AFL. As an overall implication of the case study to the project, it can be argued that an assessment of the contributions of dialectical and historical materialism to the sociological understanding of the working class culture and of the social phenomena in general, might be possible. Further, some basic propositions for a Marxist theory of working class culture and of the sociology of culture in general, will be attempted.

Limitations

1. The case study will be limited by the following factors:

a) the events under examination are of recent history and some of them are still in the process of becoming; for others, their effects upon the social processes that are taking place in the AFL, as up to this moment, are still very strong.

b) there are not other similar cases of recent Alberta labour history that would allow direct comparison and critique.

2. There are only a few studies which utilize the present methodology (most of them are dealing with issues of the political economy and only a few with issues of culture) and none recent enough dealing with the question of working class culture. Hence, the nature of the project is largely experimental and exploratory.

Delimitations

The focus of this case study will be the AFL as the sample population representing Alberta organized labour. Further, only a limited number of interviews will be completed for the purposes of this research project.

II. CHAPTER II: BRIEF ON METHODOLOGY AND THEORY.

"In times of weakness, often, is not the right 'line' is missing, but one 'line'. In our theory, one phrase is tied with the other but which one is more appropriate for the conditions? Everything is here, but everything is too much. Proposals are not missing, but too many are becoming acceptable. The correct statements are not missing, but we forget them too often. In times of weakness someone might be militant, but not committed. In times of weakness a lot of things are correct, but also many are necessary and only few can be done: the one ostracized from the struggle exists in tranquility but he cannot find peace". (B. Brecht, Political Notes, 1980:25).

A. THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD AND THE DIALECTICS.

The question of what constitutes the basic principles of the classical Marxist sociology-its points of methodological and theoretical departure and conclusion-has been summarized by Lenin in three different instances. In the first, Lenin describes what he says should be "the criteria for a scientific sociology." (Lenin cited in Selsam, 1980: 196-194). Starting from a critique of Rousseau's visions, (expressed in his work "The Social Contract" in which he claims that "social relations were established by work consciously"), Lenin puts forward the Marxist idea that people were never "aware of the sum-total of the social relations in which they live as something definite, integral, as something pervaded by some principle" (ibid 196-197). For Lenin, people simply "adopt themselves to these relations which have been created before this by other people and by them in their everyday particular though conscious life." (ibid:196) Further that the people's ideas about society depend, to one extent or the other, and in the final analysis, "on the course of things" which do not necessarily find expression in their totality, in their individual consciousness. (ibid:197)

The second point that Lenin argues is, that Marxism by "singling out" the priority in its understanding of social reality of the relations of production as the basic structure of society and of the formation of all social relations, makes it possible to exclude "subjectivism" and at the same time to explain the phenomena of "repetition and order." (ibid:197) On this basis objective historical comparisons between various societies also

become possible as well as the identification of what is similar or different in the historical development of these societies (ibid:196).

The third and last point that Lenin makes about the Marxist "criteria of scientific sociology" is the relationship of the relations of production with the forces of production. He argues that Marxism by positing the former as dependent to a large extent upon the latter made it possible to overcome the notion of society "as a mechanical aggregation of individuals" subject to the will of the powerful (ibid). Instead, this deduction allowed the understanding of the development of society as "a process of natural history" with its existence predominantly determined by the fact that people became socially interrelated out of the need to the production process. In that sense the concept of the "socio-economic formation" was introduced as an alternative to the abstract notion of society (ibid).

In another set of arguments Lenin (Marx, Engels, & Lenin 1972: 512-513) raises the question about how it is possible for sociology to overcome "subjectivism", and how "objectivity" can be established in the process of collecting the facts about a particular measurement or process in social life. He argues that "facts" in order to present and describe the objective reality that exists in a phenomenon or a process, need first to be viewed within the specific sociohistorical context within which these facts have emerged. Second, "minor facts" should be interconnected in their entirety, so their independence is preserved, and at the same time the totality of the particular phenomenon or process can be captured and explained (ibid).

From Abstract to Concrete.

Lenin's brief summary of the theoretical and methodological concerns in classical Marxist sociology, raises three important questions that can be used as a means of analyzing and reproducing the epistemological nature and character of the perspective. First, is the question of how classical Marxism's theoretical conclusions have been reached. The second question is what are the preconditions, and implications of these questions for the understanding of the phenomena of class and culture. A third question is concerned with the

"objectively" presented content and form of classical Marxist sociology in general.

Marx (1970) has argued that there are three levels of analysis, in his method, which constitute what he calls "the correct scientific method". (Marx 1970:206). This method is comprised by an approach to social and historical reality that starts from a rather abstract and overall understanding of the essential features of social reality, and proceeds to a more concrete analysis "until one reached the most simple definitions of it" (ibid:206). Then the analysis proceeds in order to "make the journey again in the opposite direction.... which is this time not a vague notion of the whole, but a totality comprising many determinations and relations" (ibid:206).

Marx criticized the 17th century economists, who were starting their analysis from the point "of the living organism" such as the population, the nation, the state, several states, and were able to construct only "a few decisive abstract, general relations, such as the division of labour, money and value" (ibid:206). However, for Marx, when these abstract concepts were further "deduced and established", it became possible to create the complex entity of an economic system described by "advanced categories" such as international exchange, and world market (ibid:206). It was in that sense that Marx argued:

> "The concrete concept is concrete because it is the synthesis of many definitions, thus representing the unity of diverse aspects. It appears therefore in reasoning as a summing-up, a result, and not as starting point, although it is the real point of origin, and thus also the point of origin of perception and imagination" (ibid:206)

Marx goes on to provide concrete examples about how categories such as property, money, labour, joint-stock companies, have in reality become dominant features only within bourgeois society, and therefore, the analysis and interpretation of this society can only be based upon the analysis and the interpretation of these concepts. However, for Marx, it is possible that first the origins of these concrete societal categories are to be found within previous sociohistorical formations, in which other categories were dominant. Second, their mode of appearance in different societies, existing at the same historical era, is also different as a result of their particular level of development, as well as due to their different cultural contexts, which ascribes to these categories a different praxial (manifesting, objectivelly, the actual historical impact of human activities) and symbolic (reflecting and expressing

subjectivelly the forms by which the former becomes consciouslly realized) significance (ibid: 207-216).

Thus for Marx, bourgeois society is the "most advanced and complex organization of production" in which the categories of its formation are also the most "advanced and complex". As such it allows the development of an insight in the understanding of previous sociohistorical economic formations. That is because the lower formations can become meaningful and understood only as long as the most "advanced forms are already known" (ibid: 211).

However, even if "the categories of bourgeois economy are valid for all other formations", this does not mean that the historical differences of these societies can be "obliterated" in any sense (ibid).

> "If one knows rent, it is possible to understand tribute, title, etc., but they do not have to be treated as identical. Rent cannot be understood without capital, but capital can be understood without rent.... It (capital) must form both the point of departure and of conclusion" (ibid:213)

Therefore, the classical Marxist understanding of sociohistorical reality seems to necessitate at the beginning a general abstract theoretical reproduction of it. Such reproduction is rather contrary to the natural sequence in which the theoretical categories and concepts have appeared in different societies. Thus, for an objective understanding of the significance of the various historical tendencies and crystalization of various forms of social relations, the point of departure and conclusion of the theoretical understanding of their sociohistorical development must be bourgeois society.

> "Their order of succession is determined by their mutual relation in modern bourgeois society, and this is quite the reverse of what appears to be natural to them" (ibid:213).

By looking into the most advanced and complex form of sociohistorical formation, it is possible to dictate not only what is important to this formation, but also what was important for previous formations despite the fact that these important features were not dominant in these past formations, nor even identical with those in the "most advanced and complex ones". This is possible because, according to Marx, of the nature of the workings of the human "intellect".

> "The totality is a conceptual entity seen by the intellect which assimilates the world in the only way open to it, a way which differs from the artistic, religious and practically intelligent assimilation of this world. The concrete subject remains outside the intellect and independent of it - that is as long as the intellect adopts a purely speculative, purely theoretical attitude. The subject society, must always be envisaged therefore as the precondition of comprehension even when the theoretical method is employed" (ibid:207).

The above outlined summary of what Marx considered to be "a correct scientific method" reflects, in a sense, the general preoccupations and pressupositions that underline the epistemological basis of the perspective. The classical Marxist understanding of the dialectical method is grounded on the materialist and historical principles. Overall, Marx's "scientific method" testifies to an understanding of an existing dialectical unity and contradiction between the processes of deduction and induction in logic and research. Following next, a summary will be attempted, to present the relevant arguments about the essense of classical Marxist dialectic, and the basis of their content and form.

The Critique of Hegel.

Mirkovic has pointed out that dialectics meant different things to different people.

> "While Hegel and Marx stressed primarily change, contradiction and negativity, Engels emphasized the ontological universality of laws of motion. With Lenin, the emphasis was on the doctrine of unity of opposites; With Lukacs it was totality, and with Marcuse it is "negative thinking". More recently Gurvitch developed his "empirico-realistic dialectic" in a critical effort to integrate the dialectical perspective and modern sociology. And with Markovitch dialectic figures as a theoretical infra-structure of critical thought" (Mirkovic, 1980:p 44)

As far as concerns the nature and the character of the differences in Marx's, Engels', and Lenin's lines of thought on Dialectic, several points should be considered. First, the examination of these differences must be based on the dialectical method and historical materialism, especially the theory of cognition. Second, their similarities have to be identified as well in order to perceive the dialectical unity and contradiction in their lines of thought along with their particular political and social relationships and affiliations. Third, the specific sociohistorical context and the nature of these relationships should also be considered.

The consideration of the above points is a necessary precondition for the understaning of the social historical grounding of Marx's, Engels', and Lenin's world-view, which has

captured the imagination and has become the basis of the mode of life and struggle of about one-third of the world's population. In this respect their dialectical unity rather than their contradiction, should be the main point of departure and conclusion in a discussion of their differences.

Hoffman (1976) provides three possible reasons for these differences; a) Marx, Engels, and Lenin considered their "Marxism" to be a science which continually deepens its reflections of reality as the concrete world itself continues to develop (ibid:207). b) Marx, Engels, and Lenin worked within different and diverse "intellectual climates" prevailing in their times, and were forced to develop different practical priorities (ibid:37). Thus Marx had to emphasize the "dialectical" responding to the critics of Hegel who were treating him as "a dead dog" (Marx cited in Selsam, 1980:98). Engels on the other hand, had to defend and expand the motion of dialectics in the philosophy and history of social and natural sciences. Marx was aware of this project as well, and had contributed to it on several occasions (Engels, 1977:15-16).

c) Lenin had to emphasize "materialism" responding to the leftism that emerged in his times and which was full with archaic idealism (Hoffman, 1976:37). As far as concerns Marx's and Engels' scientific relationship, there was between them a predecided division of labour aimed at broadening the scope of their research (ibid:49).

Marx's interest in the Hegelian dialectical method and its importance in classical Marxism, stems from his assessment that dialectic "in its rational form.....is in its essense critical and revolutionary" (Marx, cited in Selsam, 1980:99). Marx refered to the dialectic as

> "A scandal and abomination to bourgeoisdom and its doctrinaire professors, because it includes in its comprehension and affirmative recognition of the existing state of things at the same time also, the recognition of the negation of that state, in its inevitable breaking up; because it regards every historically developed social form as in fluid movement, and therefore takes into account its transient nature not less than its momentary existence; because it lets nothing be imposed upon it" (ibid).

In its popular form the Hegelian dialectic has been expressed in the form of the "Triad" namely thesis, antithesis, synthesis, a rather oversimplified conceptualization (Mirkovic, 1980:23). Traces of this expression of the dialectic are to be found in Kant's

writings (ibid). A more representative expression of the dialectic, that better reflects the complexities of the Hegelian thought and which lies closer to the Marxist understanding of the dialectic can be found in the relationship of the concepts: Being, Nothing, and Becoming:

> "Their truth (of being and nothing) is this movement of the immediate vanishing of the one into the other: becoming, a movement in which both are distinguished but by a difference which has equally immediately resolved itself" (Hegel cited in Mirkovic, ibid).

Marx has expressed the importance of the Hegelian dialectic as the general laws of logic, as follows:

> "Hegel's positive achievement here, in its speculative logic, is - that the determinant concepts, the universal fixed thought - forms in their independance vis-a-vis nature and mind are a necessary result of the general enstrangement of human essense and therefore also of human thought, and that Hegel has brought them together and presented them as moments of the abstraction process" (Marx, 1963:167).

The totality of the abstraction process, according to Marx, has been "transformed" by Hegel, "into an independent subject" that is described by the term the "idea" (Marx cited in Marx, Engels, and Lenin, 1972:143). The idea "is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of the idea" (ibid).

How did Hegel reach the concept of the "idea- absolute idea"? By logical deduction in which "superseded being [equals] essence, superseded essence (equals) is concept, the concept superseded is (equal to).... the absolute idea" (Marx, 1963:167). In that sense these different categories in logic even though they exist at the same time, only now have become moments in thought "which have no validity in isolation, but dissolved and engendered in one another..... they have become moments of motion" (Marx, ibid:162). The absolute idea therefore in the process of thinking is for Hegel, both the point of departure and the conclusion.

The first and most important category, found in Hegel's dialectical logic is that of historical motion. Motion, as Plekhanov (1974:94) has argued not only creates objects but is constantly changing them. The second category is that of contradiction and identity of opposites, which in their eternal motion create a universal totality which in return determines their state of existence. The third category is that of "absolute negativity", the negation of

the negation which implies that a positive resolution of the contradiction forms a new entity in which contradictions have been resolved.

This last category, the negation of negation, is also related to the transformation of quantity into quality. But what kind of force is behind the actual realization of this movement as dialectical? Marx argues that this force is to be found in the idea of:

> "The dialectical negativity as the moving and generating principle - is...that Hegel achieves the self-genesis of man as a process, conceives objectification as loss of the object as alienation and as transcendence of this alienation; that he thus grasps the essence of labour and comprehends objective man-true, because real man-as the outcome of man's own labour" (Marx, 1963:151).

However, Marx sees a "double error" in Hegel's dialectic (ibid:148). Despite the fact that at that time he was, still, under the influence of Fuerbach's "contemplative materialism". Nevertheless even then he was critical to Fuerbach's limitations in understanding the essence of both the Hegelian dialectic and materialism (Marx, 1963"20). Marx observed the failures of the "Young Hegelians" members of which were Marx and Engels, to move beyond their great master. In the first place Hegel, according to Marx, had perceived that:

> "The whole history of the alienation process and the whole process of the retraction of the alienation is therefore nothing but the history of the production of abstract (ie. absolute) thought of logical, speculative thought" (ibid:149).

Thus the opposition, for example, of the thing "in itself and for itself, of consciousness and self-consciousness, of object and subject..... is the opposition, within thought itself" (ibid:142). And that "all other oppositions and movements of these oppositions are but the semblance, the cloak, the exoteric shape of these oppositions" (ibid:142).

That is why, according to Marx, for Hegel "the only labour (he) knows and recognizes is abstract mental labour" (ibid:152), and therefore, "for Hegel the essence of man - man - equals self-consciousness" (ibid:153). In the second place Hegel, according to Marx, sees his "entities" as nothing but "products of the mind - thought entities" because only "mind is the true essence of man" (ibid:150). For Hegel "the dialectic of pure thought is (always) the result" (ibid:151).

For Marx then the question that emerges is, when "the absolute idea" has been achieved, then what "supersedes" it? The point of the critical appropriation of Hegel's dialectic by Marx is in fact that he starts his analysis not from consciousness but from the material, real and actual premises of life. Even in his early works "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts" Marx goes beyond Hegel but also the ahistorical non-class conceptualization of social life that was advocated by Fuerbach.

At the end he understood "estrangement" and "alienation" as being directly related to the worker. The worker in the capitalist society is "forced" to labour for the capitalist who appropriates his production and separates him from the means of production, that in the first place are owned by the capitalist. The worker's labour embodied in his product and in the means of production that he previously created, appear to him as "external nature" and an "alien" power which forces the worker into enslavement. The worker who confronts the capitalist as his opposite, for Marx, will eventually become "self consciouss" about the state of his existence within the capitalist society. This process leads eventually into the revolutionary emancipation of the workers in order to destroy the source of their life's "enstrangement and alienation" and re-establish themselves as real human beings.

In the "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts" Marx makes, rather implicitly, another important point. The process of "objectification of the human species" is a precondition and a universal characteristic of their existence. By objectified human nature Marx means nature that embodies human labour and has been transformed according to the human species' needs. The objectified human nature in its turn has "created" - here Marx is still influenced by the Hegelian line of thought - the human species. Marx, in his mature works further explains this proposition in order to emphasize the objective - outside human will and consciousness - nature which human labour can change in form but not in its essence.

On the contrary, the process of alienation is particular to the capitalist society and is related to the appropriation of worker's labour by capitalists. In this sense Marx argues, that the Hegelian dialectic "is standing on its head" and that "must be turned right side up again,

if you want to discover the rational kernel within the mystified shell" (Marx cited in Selsam, 1980:99).

The Question of Science.

This line of logic is the one that directed Marx to propose that: "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their social existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness" (Marx, 1970:21). Within this proposition the critical appropriation of the Hegelian dialectic had been completed and was moved from the idealistic to the new materialistic context.

The summary of Marx's critical appropriation of the Hegelian dialectic - that described the historical moment and the realization of the "absolute idea" in human consciousness - is offered by Marx in the following statement:

> "With me on the contrary, the Idea is nothing else than the material world reflected by human mind and transformed by human thought" (Marx cited in Marx, Engels, and Lenin, 1979:143).

On the other hand, reflection for Marx and Engels is -

> "Always a factor in the actual life of the individual, one which disappears and is reproduced as required (and) it has the same character of universality as every other manifestation of his life" (Marx, Engels, 1976b:281).

Scientific reflection however, is different from everyday reflection in the sense that the former distinguishes the real, objective moment of things in reality from their different forms of appearance. (Marx cited in Hoffman, 1976:93). The distinction of reality from appearance and the emphasis in the priority of the former upon the latter, is the basis for classical Marxist understanding of science. The "truthfulness of theoretical reflection is to be tested in the practical activity of the individuals in the course of their total sociohistorical development.

The unity of theory and praxis, however, is not to be found in consciousness but in the real life and activity of people. Theory becomes possible as part of human praxis. "Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence" (ibid:101). As theory cannot be possible without praxis, praxis cannot be possible without theory.

> "What distinguishes the worst of architects from the best of bees is this; that the architect raises his structure in his imagination, before he erects it in reality" (Marx, ibid).

It is in the same sense that Lenin argued:

> "The process of cognition is an external and endless approximation of thought to the object. But the process of reflection must be understood not lifelessly but as practical and creative activity, and that in checking and applying the correctness of his reflection in practice and technique man arrives at objective truth" (Lenin cited in Hoffman, 1976:76).

In relation to the question of what is "objective truth", for classical Marxism, it is the concept of "law" that actually expresses its theoretical form. Marx has argued that a law should be considered as a tendency towards the concrete and historical realization of a process. (Marx cited in Selsam, 1980:181). Marx makes a distinction between how these "tendencies - laws" appear in reality - as approximations that evolve numerous "practical frictions causing more or less considerable differences locally" - and how they appear in thought - "in which they are assumed" to "evolve in their pure form" (ibid:181). However, he draws attention to the fact that even in reality the "approximation" of the real to the theory (Marxist theory), is getting constantly greater (ibid:181).

Similarly to Marx's notion of "law" is Engels' understanding of the subject. In his criticism of the two most popular common sense understandings of the relation of necessity to chance Engels argues, first, that necessity and chance have been considered as separate entities with only the former to be related to the notion of "general laws". Second, he argues that chance in reality has been excluded from the understanding of what is real. The latter was explained by necessity alone. (Engels, ibid:120). On the contrary, for Engels, who follows Hegel, the accidental is necessary, and that necessity determines itself as chance, and on the other hand, this chance in reality is rather an absolute necessity (ibid:121). For Engels this fundamental proposition along with the general laws of dialectics should be "deduced" from the actual examination of nature and history and not mistakenly so, to be "foisted" upon them (ibid:123).

He goes on to argue that as a result of this comprehension of reality, "laws in general - none of them has any reality except as approximation, tendency, average, and not as

immediate reality" (Engels cited in Selsam, 1980:177). He concludes that otherwise "there would be no change; on the day when concepts and reality completely coincide in the organic world development comes to an end" (ibid:178). Determinism therefore, for Marx and Engels is both absolute as a process that explains the movement of things towards their necessary "pure" realization and at the same time "relative" for this movement is both accidental and non-linear, as their actual historical appearance demonstrates.

Finally, the "general laws" of dialectics are to be found both in history and nature, and therefore they have universal character. This work was mostly undertaken by Engels, but under the supervision and cooperation of Marx (Hoffman 1976:46). The importance of the universality of dialectics for classical Marxism has also been demonstrated by Lukacs, one of the first and most important critics of this notion in his early works (Lukacs, 1983:24).

Lukacs in his late "self criticism" about some of his important distortions of historical materialism argued that those who try to separate and confine the dialectic only to history

> "have one thing in common, whether they like it or not and irrespective of their philosophical origins or political effects: they strike at the root of Marxian ontology. I refer to the tendency to view Marxism exclusively as a theory of society, as social pilosophy, and hence to ignore or repudiate it as a theory of nature" (Lukacs, 1983:46).

The classical Marxist understanding of the dialectic and its role in scientific method and the theory of cognition can be characterized as being materialistic and historical. Human history, however, is in itself an objective reality, relatively independent from nature, nevertheless a qualitative continuation of the natural process. Consciousness on the other hand, is related and dependent upon human praxis, which is presupposed, and at the same time relatively determined by the objective human sociohistorical existence.

The "laws" of dialectics have also a deterministic quality in the sense that determination is derived out of the concrete examination of real processes that tend from their relative and local state of existence, to their absolute and "pure" realization. Finally, the dialectic is universally applied, as long as the above propositions are simultaneously considered, and as such they count for both forms of the motion of matter: natural and social.

As far as it concerns the understanding of classical Marxism as an organic totality, and despite the apparent differences and discontinuities in the form of expression of different arguments and proposals by Marx, Engels, and Lenin, the continuities that exist in their line of thought are presented and significantly supported by their dialectical analysis.

Following we will examine how the "scientific method" and the dialectic of classical Marxism has been applied in order to explain social history and the development of the "base/superstructure" model.

B. BASE and SUPERSTRUCTURE.

In the previous section the importance of the classical Marxist proposition that "being determines consciousness" was examined from a dialectical point of view, in relation to its actual use within the content of historical and dialectic materialism.

The latter was approached from the point of view of the "spiral" that the "correct scientific method" had proposed: i.e., by considering the dialectical unity and contradiction of the deductive/inductive process. This process as it appears in the theory of cognition - as it has been proposed by the perspective - could be described to pass through at least three distinct, but nevertheless, interdependent stages: (a) An abstract and general exposition of the relation of being to consciousness; (b) a concrete historical examination of the form by which reality appears and in which human praxis itself seems to be what is called "the excluded middle", in the relationship of social being to consciousness. (c) That consciousness as theoretical praxis exists in dialectical unity and contradiction with social praxis and tends to reflect an approximation of the "pure" objectively existing content of the "being".

Following Engels' proposal about the nature of concepts and of laws, the base/superstructure model can only be comprehended within the premises of classical Marxism as an "asymptotic approximation" of the real and objective social history (Engels cited in Selsam, 1980:177). Its primary importance for the perspective is not one of a "definition of social history" but rather of "analytical" value (Engels cited in Selsam, 1980:180). However, classical Marxism, by being consistent with its "scientific method" and the processes involved

in it, has developed at least three stages in its analysis and interpretation of social history that in some degree correspond with the three modes of use and appearance of the base/superstructure model within the perspective.

In his "Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy" Marx introduces his general and abstract expression of the model.

> "In social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely, relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. (Marx 1970:20-21)

Marx then proceeds to explain the basic contradictions of every class society, namely, those between the forces of production and the relations of production. When the latter have been overcome by the development of the former, the process of revolutionary transformation begins. Marx then proceeds to explain the basic contradictions of class-divided societies in which the development of the forces of production appears as a priority for the change that will occur in the relations of production which do not correspond anymore with the necessities of the forces of production (ibid:20).

In the study of this contradiction it is necessary, according to Marx, to distinguish between "the material transformation of the economic conditions of production" - that can be studied with the "precision of natural sciences" - and their corresponding "ideological forms" by which people become aware of the existing contradictions (ibid:21).

As a "broad outline" of socio-historical development, Marx identifies at least four different modes of production: "Asiatic, ancient, feudal, and modern bourgeois." The latter appears as "the last antagonistic" mode of production. This antagonism is not individual; rather, it emerges from "the individual's social condition of existence." Within the bourgeois mode of production the "material conditions for the dissappearance of antagonism as the mechanism for social development also emerge. Thus, with that last antagonistic mode of production: "The prehistory of human society accordingly closes." (ibid:21)

The Analysis of Reality.

The practical application of the model in analysing the historical existence of individuals in antagonistic class societies starts from the point of material conditions in the life of people and simultaneously describes their particular form of appearance both in reality and in consciousness. Thus, Engels for example, in the "The Peasant War in Germany", explains the appearance of different interpretations of the Bible by Luther and Muntzer, in relation to their political praxis: Reformistic-Revolutionary. This analysis is done on the basis of how these two forms of praxis, in some degree correspond with the needs, interests, aspirations and expectations which are commonly shared by different and antagonistic classes of people. (Engels, 1969:40-60) Then he proceeds to explain the historical emergence of these classes, independently and regardless of their consciousness and their political action, by reproducing their actual socio-historical conditions of their lives within feudal society in the German-Prussian context (ibid). Thus, Engels, in order to explain the source of the revolutionary sentiments of the "plebeians", argues:

> "The plebeians were the only [ones] that stood outside the existing official society. They had no access to either the Feudal or Barter association. They had neither privileges nor property; they did not even have the kind of property the peasants of the petty burgher had, which was highly burdened with taxes. They were unpropertied and rightless in every respect; their living conditions never even brought them into direct contact with the existing institutions which ignored them completely. They were a living (symptom) of the decay of the Feudal and the guild--burgher society, and at the same time the first precursors of the modern bourgeois society" (ibid:45-46).

These living conditions of the plebeians were the historical cause, according to Engels, which lead them to go "in fantasy at least, beyond the then scarcely dawning modern bourgeois society" (ibid:45). Their "fantasy" found a convenient expression in Muntzer's teachings about justice, equality, and well-being, in the form of the Chiliastic "dream visions of early Christianity" (ibid:46). In this example, Engels demonstrates how the "ideas" of a particular class find their expresion through a specific medium - the Bible - in the teachings of Muntzer. He then proceeds to connect ideas and practices with the material and historical conditions of the plebians. At the end, he proceeds to demonstrate the causes, behind their victories, and then final defeat, in relation to the antagonistic practices and the ideas of their

enemy: the Catholic Church and its collaborator, Luther.

Marx, on the other hand, "On the Paris Commune" emphasizes the dialectical relations between the political and the economic; he proceeds to illustrate how the "political character" in the rule of the revolutionary bourgeoisie changes "simultaneously with the economic change of society". Bourgeois "rule" for Marx is not only the reflection of the various conflicts between and within the ruling classes, but basically demonstrates the change in the very character of their rule that come as a consequence of the further industrial development of "civil society".

> "At the same pace that the progress of industry developed, widened and intensified the class antagonism between capital and labour, the governmental power assumed more and more the character of the national power of capital over labour, of a political force organized to enforce despotism" (Marx and Engels, 1980: 218-219).

For Marx the basic motive behind this process is the common "economic interest" of the ruling classes that propels them to overcome their differences in order to face the common enemy: the producer. Thus, the bourgeois parties the "Legitimists, Orleanists, bourgeois Republicans and the Bonapartists adventurers" who all were quite eager to qualify themselves as the "great 'defenders of private property', joined together in the 'Party of Order'." For Marx this Party within the context of the "Parliamentary Republic", did not only expressed the "reign of terror" exercised by the ruling class, but

> "The state power becomes in their hands the avowed instrument of civil war of the capitalist and the landlord, not (to say of) their state parasites, against the revolutionary aspirations of the producer."

Marx in this example, demonstrates the "economic unease" of the ruling classes and the impact that this expression had upon the socio-historical development of a particular society.

In "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", Marx offers another concrete example of the application of the base/superstructure model analysing social history (Marx and Engels, 1976: 478-479). In this work, Marx discusses why and how the small-holding peasants supported the "coup d'etat" of Bonaparte. Again he proceeds from the point of the actual conditions in their life. These conditions had kept them in isolation from each other and had directed them towards an almost self-sufficient existence. This form of existence had not

allowed them to develop any kind of class, social, political or even community organization. Thus, they had failed to develop any form of class consciousness. However, due to this failure they were also unable to find a way by which they could "represent themselves". Within this context Napoleon III appears for them as a representative of their interests and at the same time, as "an authority over them". He manages to present himself to them both as their master and as their protector.

At this point in his analysis, Marx draws the distinction that characterized the interests of the "revolutionary" and the "conservative" peasants. For Marx, Napoleon III in order to capture the support and the imagination of the peasants did not promise them a glorification of their class that would come as a result of a revolution against the real social condition of their life. On the contrary, the glory that Napoleon promised to them, was for Marx, the glory that would come as a result of the "consolidation" of peasants "holdings". It was therefore a glory that would be based not in their prospects of the future development but of their survival as it had happened in the past. Thus, what Napoleon was actually expressing were the interests and aspirations of the most conservative and even reactionary elements of the peasantry (ibid: 480).

How was this possible for Napoleon? Marx argues that this became possible because Napoleon was in fact expressing the kind of consciousness that the absolute majority of the small-holding peasants held at that time. This dominant consciousness -false for Marx because it did not allow the peasants to overcome the limitation of their class existence-was in fact reflecting the social, economic, and political conditions perceived by the peasantry as a whole.

In this example, Marx demonstrates again the unity of ideas and existence of a particular class within the context of a "false class consciousness" that has a direct impact upon the present and the future conditions of life of this class. The support of Napoleon by the peasants, was for Marx, the personification of their false class consciousness and at the same time the survival of their material existence as peasants in the immediate future.

In its overall consideration this application of the base/superstructure model expresses the second stage in classical Marxist scientific method: the dialectical unity and contradiction that exists in all the spheres of social historical existence of the classes. The concrete analysis of this contradictory existence demonstrates how humans "value their own (particular) history" and Marx emphasizes the importance of praxis in overcoming this particularity in some form. On the other hand, it demonstrates that the historical course of this contradictory existence depends upon the actual circumstances in their lives. As such what humans perceived to be the result of their praxis, only rarely and rather accidentally will correspond with what they thought it would be. As a rule, the gap between reality and the idea remains, and is historically reproduced.

From Specific to General.

Another use of the base/superstructure model, by classical Marxism is related first to the dialectic relation that exists between the abstract and the concrete. The former is always an approximation of the latter. It can only be a result (a "summing up") of the concrete historical analysis and thus it needs continuous practical verification and validation for every historical case.

Further, this use of the model examines the impact that ideas have upon the development of particular programs of social action - of praxis - as well as upon the material conditions of the historical existence of classes and individuals. Thus, for example, it explains the impact that the theoretical abstraction of reality can have upon concrete analysis as well as upon real life.

Then in a sense, it further verifies the inseparability of the various processes in life and thought emphasized in the last stage of the "scientific method" of classical Marxism. It completes the deduction/induction process, as the abstract preconception of reality (after the concrete and historical examination of the actual events) becomes more representative and more explanatory.

Marx and Engels, for example, in "German Ideology" argued that:

> "This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of those individuals, a definite focus of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part"(Marx and Engels 1976:20).

Marx and Engels, in criticising Bruno's position about the "antitheses in man and nature" had insisted that "man. . .always has before him an historical nature and a natural history" and that "the unity of man with nature has always existed in industry", and depended upon the particular stage of development of industry (ibid:28). This "unity" of "man" with nature, however, is not to be understood by any means separately from the "struggle" of "man" with nature. "Unity" and "struggle" of "man" with nature exist together throughout the development of humanity on "a corresponding basis" with the development of its "productive powers" (ibid).

It is in this sense that Marx and Engels understood the "unity and struggle of 'man' with nature" to exist within every socio-economic formation and testifies to the "unity and contradiction of the base with the superstructure". For Marx and Engels the four aspects of social activity i.e.: the production of material needs; their social reproduction; the reproduction of life in procreation, and the production of consciousness-

> "are not of course to be taken as...different stages, but just as...aspects or...'movements' which have existed simultaneously since the dawn of the history and the first men, and which still assert themselves in history today" (ibid:31).

Which aspect, however, will appear as the dominant within a particular stage of socio-historical development depends upon the development of labour in general. Thus, Engels argues in "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State" that in primitive communal societies labour was not well developed and consequently the value of production was quite low. Thus, such a society, "appears to be dominated by ties of sex." (Engels cited in Hoffman, 1986:130).

Again in this example, Engels demonstrates the particular mode of approximation of reality in the particular consciousness that prevailed in that period. To that Marx had argued:

> "[J]ust as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks abour himself, so

> one cannot judge such a period of transformation by its consciousness, but on the contrary this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life" (Marx, 1970:21).

On the issue of the impact of the superstructure upon the base and for that of consciousness upon being, Marx explains this process in "Capital (vol. 1)" by making a reference to the nature and character of labour. For Marx, labour as a process brings "man" and nature together in order to "oppose himself to Nature as one of her own forces (Marx cited in Woolfson, 1982:5).

> "By this acting on the external world and changing of it, he at the same time changes his own nature. He develops his slumbering powers and compels them to act in obedience to his way" (ibid).

For Engels, it is on the basis of collective labour that speech emerges simultaneously as "men in the making arrived at the point where they had something to say to one another." (ibid:7). It is this process in which labour and articulated speech become the means by which the human species changes its natural existence to a social one (ibid). In their interaction, labour and speech give birth to the emergence of human intelligence and consciousness, and hence, "gave an ever renewed impulse to further development of both labour and speech" (ibid). This becomes the necessary precondition for the continuous mastering of nature.

In a more direct example of the impact of superstructure upon the base, Marx and Engels use the process of the distribution of wealth in a society to demonstrate the unity and the contradiction between production and distribution and the influence of the latter upon the former.

> "Industry and commerce, production and exchange of the necessities of life, themselves determine distribution, the structure of the different social classes and are, in turn, determined by it as to the mode in which they are carried on" (Marx and Engels, 1976:28).

The same idea is repeated in Marx's "Contribution to the Ciritque of Political Economy" where he argued that:

> "A distinct mode of production...determines the specific mode of consumption, distribution, exchange and the specific relations of these different phases to one another. Production in the narrow sense however, is in its turn also determined by the other aspects" (Marx, 1970: 201).

In terms of the impact that the political-ideological institutions of a given society have upon the mode of production, Marx argued that this impact under certain historical circumstances can reach to a point where these institutions dominate the appearance of this society instead of its mode of production. Again this would be a result of the development of labour itself. Thus, Marx explains that in the middle ages religion in the form of Catholicism "reigned supreme, where for Athens and Rome it was politics" (Marx, Capital vol. 1:82).

He proceeds to explain however, that:

> "This much, however, is clear that the middle ages could not live on Catholicism nor the ancient world on politics. On the contrary, it is the mode in which they gained a livelihood that explains that here politics, and there Catholicism played the chief part" (ibid).

As far as the role of the state is concerned and the causes for its particular mode of historical appearance, Marx and Engels provide a concrete and highly complex analysis and interpretation of one of its forms of emergence. Under Absolute Monarchy the state emerged in the "most stunted semipatriarchical form." (Marx and Engels, 1976:210). This form of the state in Germany was a function of an economy destroyed by the "Peasant Wars". This economy had to depend upon the backward Junker peasants and the relative independent petty princes. The "middle-classes" on the other hand were forced to depend upon a foreign bourgeoisie (i.e. Holland) and on a small-scale and technologically outdated manufacturing production. These factors had contributed to the "fragmentation of class interests" (ibid:209). Class fragmentation had destroyed the possibility of class organizations that would allow the domination of one class over the other. As such, at that time one could find only "farmer estates and classes which were not yet born" (ibid:209).

Absolute Monarchy was the only possible alternative as a form of government for such a society. By adopting Kant's ideology that ascribed to French liberalism from an ethical and not class position, the absolute monarchy in Germany gave its rule the necessary ideological form of expression.

Its actual political rule, however, was

> "Owing to a division of labour that was responsible for the administration of public interests and which acquired an abnormal independence which became still greater in the bureaucracy of modern times" (ibid:209).

In that sense absolute monarchy in Germany was not only the result and the necessary expression of the economic situation in this country, but at the same time, it determined and perpetuated politically, ideologically as well as economically this particular social pattern.

Within this context of analysis, the emphasis is upon the concrete and historical. Marx in another example explains how the particular course of development of the "expropriation" process --a universal quality for every succeeding class-divided socio-economic formation-- changed the class structure of ancient Rome. Expropriation of peasants in Rome did not lead to capitalism but to slavery, Marx argued. This is the result of the particular circumstances within which an event takes place (Marx and Engels, 1975:294). The content and the form of base/ superstructure differs from society to society. To use one particular form of appearance of the base/superstructure model in order to explain all others -"one will never arrive there by using as one's master key a general historico-philosophical theory, the supreme virtue of which consists in being supra-historical" (ibid). Otherwise, it runs the danger to repeat in theory, Don Quixote's error:

> "Don Quixote long ago paid the penalty for wrongly imagining that Knight errantry was compatible with all economic forms of society" (Marx, Capital vol. 1:82).

The last use and interpretation of the base/superstructure model represents in classical Marxism, what Hegel had called the "excluded middle" (Hegel cited in Selsam, 1980:372). Hegel emphasized this proposal in order to demonstrate how it was possible that everything existed in opposition to something else, i.e. the abstract with the concrete, and in this case the base with the superstructure. However, as Lenin argues, Hegel in fact discovered the "excluded middle" to exist in itself. "The Something" says Hegel, "is itself the third term which was supposed to be excluded" (ibid). Lenin further explains "'A' itself is the third, for A can be both +A and -A" (ibid).

The base/superstructure model of social history, therefore, is not "excluded" by the contradiction between its abstract and concrete form of appearance but rather "induced" to a model that is correct in itself and is the synthesis of both. The importance and priority, however, always lies on the concrete and real.

As Engels argues that historical materialism, and therefore the model that explains social history, "is above all a guide to study, not a lever for construction [theoretical] after the Hegelian manner." (Marx and Engels, 1975:343)

> "All history must be studied afresh, the conditions of existence of the different formations of society must be examined in detail before the attempt is made to deduce further the political, civil-law, aesthetic, philosophic, religious, etc., views corresponding to them" (ibid).

In a letter to Block (Marx and Engels, 1928:394-395), Engels further explains the interaction, interconnection and interdependence of the economic, political, social, ideological factors upon the historical course of class struggle. He argues that the "economic should assert itself" as the result of the concrete analysis.

> "Among these the economic ones are ultimately decisive. But, the political etc., and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds also play a part, although not the decisive one" (ibid:395).

Engels proceeds in a "self-criticism" (for himself and Marx) for over-emphasizing the economic and for not paying equal theoretical attention to other factors. But for Engels, as well as for Lenin later on, this over-emphasis, comes from the fact that they had to counterbalance their political opponents in this realm of theory and political practices who were still overwhelmed by idealism. However, for Engels and Marx,

> "When it came to presenting a section of history, that is, to applying the theory in practice, it was a different matter, and there no error was permissable " (ibid:396).

Finally, in another letter to Schmidt (ibid:401), Engels proceeds to further explain the relative dependence of consciousness to being and that of superstructure to base. For Engels, despite the "supremacy of economic development" in general for the theoretical understanding of social history, for the phenomena of consciousness and respectively of those on superstructure

> "economy creates nothing anew, but it determines the way in which the body of thought found in existence is altered and further developed, and that too for the most part indirectly, for it is the political legal, and moral reflexes which exert the greatest direct influences" (ibid).

In this sense, thinking and consciousness have two levels of appearance: a cognitive -or direct knowledge of the immediate reality; and a metacognitive -or articulated knowledge

about the totality of experience in which the concrete has been incorporated within the abstract. Thus, for example, as Hoffman argues, "human production" and social reproduction of existence is not taking place without thought and consciousness, "but what happens in the world of production occurs independently of what people may happen to think is happening" (Hoffman, 1926:111). The "externality" of social existence refers not to thought "as such", rather it refers to thought "as an interpretation", a metacognition "of what is going on". (ibid).

It is not that individuals are without consciousness - consciousness that spontaneously emerges as a response and direct reflection of their circumstances. However, true class consciousness would require a metacognitive assessment of the totality of the socio-historical conditions of the various classes' existence in struggle. This theoretical and practical activity brings together both the past and the future of a class in its present life-process, and allows the continuous re-assessment of the direction of the historical development of a class. (Marx and Engels, 1976, vol. 1, 68).

Partial Understandings of the Model.

The fact that these three forms in the use and interpretation of base/superstructure in Classical Marxism, have been considered as distinctive separate entities has produced partial approaches to the model, which are reflected in at least, three corresponding misinterpretations: a mechanical, an interactive, and a dialectical-idealistic.

The mechanical interpretation of the model has led towards the appreciation of the abstract and general application of the model as being applicable, in its face-value, in the explanation of every event in the totality of social history. The economic element - the base - is perceived as the absolute determinant factor for every sphere and area of social reality. In fact, this interpretation is responsible for the exclusion of the role that conscious human praxis has to play in the development of class struggle. It leads toward a passive and nihilistic stance towards life, for it has reduced the historical importance of the individual to secondary and minimal role. Thus, for example, Kautsky argued that capitalism will be destroyed by

itself due to its inherent contradictions and therefore no revolutionary political activity is required.

The interactive interpretation, on the other hand, has over-emphasized the role of human praxis in history and has dismissed the model's validity altogether. For if praxis is in itself both theoretical and social, their contradiction is overcome in praxis itself and thus there is no need for a theoretical analysis as such.

Lukacs, for example, had argued that as long as in reality everything interacted in forming one totality, then:

> "It is not the primacy of economic motives in historical explanation that constitutes the decisive difference between Marxism and bourgeois science but the point of view of totality....the primacy of the category of totality is the bearer of the revolutionary principle in science" (Lukacs, 1985:xx-xxi).

It was, however, Lukacs himself who a few decades later in his self-criticism, argued that his over-emphasis on totality was in fact "a Hegelian distortion of Marxism" (ibid). He then proceeds to re-establish Lenin's emphasis on the difference between being and consciousness - where being has an objective existence outside consciousness, and conscious praxis is required in order to change the form of the objective reality, according to the particular class needs, interests, expectations, and aspirations.

The third "dialectical-idealistic" interpretation of the base/superstructure model refers to a theoretical abstraction that exists only in consciousness without having any real and objective historical premises.

Karl Mannheim, for example, argues following this line of thought that,

> "the economic sphere was, in the last analysis, in spite of occasional denials of this fact, a structural interrelationship of mental attitudes. The existent economic sphere was precisely a 'system', i.e. something which arises in the sphere of the mind (the objective mind as Hegel understood it)" (Mannheim, cited in Hoffman, 1983:112).

For a dialectical and historico-materialistic understanding of the base/superstructure model however, it becomes apparent that first, all the three stages of the scientific method of classical Marxism need to be taken under consideration as constituting one dialectical entity. Base and superstructure exist in unity and contradiction to each other. Simultaneously, the model as an abstract interpretation of social history exists in unity and contradiction with

reality itself, testifying to the dialectical relationship of being with consciousness. The analytical (theoretical) separation of base from superstructure, as well as that of being from consciousness, can only be understood as an attempt to emphasize "a priority within unity" (Hoffman, cited in Woolfson, 1983:84).

In that respect consciousness reflects being in a constant approximation as superstructure reflect the base. The base/superstructure model reflects on the social base the being/consciousness relationship. This process of approximation retains both its unity and contradiction throughout the historical development of a particular social formation. In the end, its particular form of social manifestation would depend upon the development of praxis (social-theoretical) that continuously produces, reproduces, and changes social reality.

The emphasis, therefore, that Engels placed upon historical materialism as a "method of study" does not reject the final proposals that this method produces. The latter has been over-emphasized again by Lukacs, who considers historical materialism exclusively as a method, and has attempted to demonstrate "the changing character" of historical materialism within the new circumstances, on the line that has been critically described and eventually rejected as an error by Lukacs himself (Lukacs, 1983:1).

The theoretical application of historical materialism and the dialectical method upon itself cannot lead to its destruction, for it has been considered by its founders as a science that is based upon the real and material premises of living individuals. Historical materialism and the dialectical method can be destroyed by the course of social historical development itself; an event that will take place as a negation of negation. Historical materialism and dialectics would become theoretically appropriated within a new theoretical and methodological framework, with the same or different name.

In that respect, historical materialism and the dialectical method, from the point of view of the perspective itself, can be recognized as a closed/open system: closed in terms of its general methodological and consequently broad theoretical propositions; open to its development and demystification. The question of whether the latter will lead, through gradual changes to a qualitative negation of it will depend upon the total sociohistorical

development of humanity, and in the final instance, the abolition of the real sociohistorical condition that in the first place gave birth to it.

In any case, the verification of its main hypothesis is to be based upon a continuous application of it in the examination of the real and the historical. Thus the a priori appearance of the theoretical proposition of the perspective can only be established a posteriori: after the consideration of the historical development and as a result of human praxis.

For Marx and Engels, it is important to differentiate the three distinct historical moments: being, the social existence and activity of humans, and their consciousness, i.e., the interpretation of their being. For only through this dialectical distinction can an evaluation and redirection of the objective sociohistorical activity become possible.

The practical validity and explanatory strength of the Base/Superstructure model stems out of the fact that it is not a mere product of the function of the mind. Rather, it is an abstraction of the concrete sociohistorical analysis of reality. Thus, it reflects and corresponds to this reality in a more accurate and precise manner than other theoretical constructs.

III. CHAPTER III: CLASS AND CULTURE.

"Come! we ought to join the others before they come here looking for us. And let me tell you, my friend that I can see you are too apt to fall into mere dreamy musing: no doubt because you are not yet used to our life of repose amidst of energy; of work which is pleasure and pleasure which is work" (William Morris, News from Nowhere, 1970:176).

The Class in Itself and for Itself.

The base/superstructure model that reflects classical Marxism's understanding of the totality of social history serves as the basis upon which its theories of class and culture are built. The two dialectically united features of the base/superstructure model - the epistemological and ontological - are also extended to the theory of class, in order to provide the outline of its particular characteristics.

The epistemological features assume that a distinction must be made between class as an objective phenomenon - which is outside human volition, and which emerges as a particular kind of exploitative relation that develops during material production - and class as a reflection, expression and manifestation in praxis of the antagonistic and contradictory consciousness that develops in a society based upon exploitative social relations, of social reality.

The original distinction of the "class in itself" and "class for itself" is to be found in Marx's 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, where he argues in reference to the formation of peasantry into a class:

> "In so far as milions of families live under economic conditions of existence which separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class". (Marx and Engels, vol.1, 1976:479)

And he goes on arguing that:

> "In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organization among them, they do not form a class" (ibid:479).

For Marx and Engels the appearance of a class is the result of "the common battle of separate individuals against another class" (Marx and Engels, 1976 vol 1 p.65). The essence of the class, however, is its objective and "independent existence over against the individuals" who find themselves within predestined conditions of life and development (ibid). Thus, Marx and Engels argue that:

> "The burghers had created the conditions in so far as they had turned themselves free from feudal ties and were created by them insofar as they were determined by their antagonism to the feudal system which they found in existence" (ibid:64).

The relation therefore, of an individual with his/her class appears as being produced by and through their praxis. The individual enters a particular class rather accidentally and as a member who belongs to it not as a conscious individual but "as an average" (ibid:68). It is only through their common realization of the conditions of their life-process within a particular mode of production and their activation upon their class reality that allows the formation of the class as a revolutionary community (ibid:68). In that community individuals do not enter anymore their class as members of the class but as conscious individuals. "It is as individuals that the individuals participate in it" (ibid:68).

In the following sections of the chapter a review of the general theoretical arguments of classical Marxism, pertaining to the two -dialectically united and contradictory- forms in defining class, will be presented. Through this process it is hoped that the broad and general understanding of the essence of class culture in capitalist societies, as it has been perceived by classical Marxism, might become possible.

A. THE OBJECTIVE FORMATION OF CLASS.

In every period of transformation Marx argues, a -

> "distinction should always be made between the material transformations of economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of the natural sciences,.....[and the] .....ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out".(Marx and Engels, Vol. 1, 1976:504)

Under the impact of the continuous technological and scientific revolution and the ever further deepening of the social and technical division of labour, capitalist societies have constantly experienced structural and cultural changes that affect both the formation and the

boundaries of their basic classes. Classes according to Marx, have historically emerged as a product of the social division of labour: the basic separation of the sphere of production from the sphere of consumption.

In any case, this goes without saying that classical Marxism's general framework of social evolution and change should not be understood in any absolute sense i.e.: that it takes the same form and content for every society. Rather, as it has been earlier argued, the real and concrete differences that can be found in the course of development between and within the various societies are to be considered important and primary for the theoretical understanding of social history. However, classical Marxism, which deals with the totality of human evolution and change, appreciates these variations in a relative sense, i.e.: as tendencies and approximations of what primarily characterizes social history as a whole.

The theoretical basis for the latter is to be found in the present form of appearance of human societies, regarded as a dialectically united and contradictory totality. Thus comparative analysis of the similarities and differences between and within specific societies, for classical Marxism, takes place on the basis of their comparison with what has been perceived to be, at the present, the general and abstract understanding of social history. The discussion, therefore, of class and culture is mostly interested in their general and abstract theoretical formulation of their definitions, without this to mean, by any sense, a leveling of their concrete historical manifestations. As a matter of fact, the concrete case study of the Alberta Federation of Labour serves the purpose of a possible comparative understanding between the general and the specific manifestations of a particular class culture in civil society.

Thus, firstly classes emerged due to the initial position of some individuals, within the process of social production, as private property of the means of production emerges. As a direct consequence to that in the early tribal societies - the emergence of a small group of individuals of the tribal aristocracy - the first exploitors appeared. Second, classes emerge through the process of enslavement of some of the members of ones own family- women and children and then of the members of the other tribes. (Marx and Engels, Selected Writings,

vol. 1, 1976, 34-36).

Classes therefore, exist according to specific modes of production. They are the basic characteristic of specific relations of production that develop within that mode. The fundamental characteristic of that mode, -in either the earlier or in modern societies, - is first, the exploitation of one human being by another; and second, the appropriation of the labour and its products of a large part of the population by a small number of appropriators.

This subjugation of the many to the few comes as the result of sociohistorical relations that developed on the basis of the private ownership and control over the means of production. What then appears as a relation between men and things, ie. tools, products, natural resourses, is actually a relation between humans. These relations are formed on the basis of a social division of labour and of a definite level of development of the society as a whole. (Marx and Engels, German Ideology, 1976, 38-41).

According to Marx and Engels, the forms that the exploited classes - the labouring classes - throughout their historical evolution are to be found in the slave, the serf and wage labour. The differences between them is determined according to:

> "The relations of production {which} in their totality constitute what are called the social relations, society, and specifically, a society at a definite stage of historical development ... Ancient society, Feudal society, Bourgeois society, are such totalities of production relations, each of which at the same time denotes a special stage of development in the history of mankind".(Marx and Engels, 1976, vol. 1:160)

Engels has pointed out the historical differences between the the slave, the serf, and the proletarian, - Marx had demonstrated that the conditions of life of the latter are the worst of all other kinds of labourers. (Marx and Engels, 1976, vol. 1: 83-84). The proletariat as class and not as individuals are exploited by another class and not by a single individual. The proletariat exists in the middle of competition and not outside of it. In order to free itself, it has to abolish competition, division of labour, and private property, as well as classes altogether and not just to substitute one form of private property with another (ibid).

Marx similarly has argued that proletarians,

> "in imagination ..... seem freer under the dominance of bourgeoisie than before , because their conditions of life seem accidental; in reality of course, they are less free, because they are more subjected to the violence of things" (Marx and Engels,

1976, vol 1: 66).

The classes, found in the capitalist mode of production emerged as a result of the so called "primitive accumulation of capital" that Marx dates back to the 16th century (Marx and Engels, 1976, vol 2: 102). The basis for the formation of the two major classes in the capitalist mode of production for Marx is the "servitude of the labourer". The early emergence of capitalism "consisted in a change of form of this servitude, in the transformation of feudal exploitation into capitalist exploitation" (ibid:102).

For Marx, one of the most important reasons for the emergence of capitalism was the emancipation "from serfdom and from the fetters of guilds" that the labouring classes in feudalism attained through their struggle. By doing so, "these new free men became sellers of themselves only after they had been robbed of all their own means of production" and they had lost their old "security" of existence (ibid:102).

The transformation of the "scatter private property" that is to be found under feudalism, into the property of the few, "the expropriation of the peasants and the labourers" according to Marx, "forms the prelude to the history of capital" (ibid:143).

In that sense, however, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are the major classes within the capitalist mode of production which in fact are continuously socially and economically produced and reproduced within this context. The question of how their actual production and reproduction is taking place is first of all directly related to the mode of exploitation under capitalism.

Exploitation

The capitalist mode of production is particularly characterized by the production, circulation, exchange, distribution and consumption of commodities (products of human labour) that are not destined to be individually consummed by their producers, but are intended for the purpose of exchange within a market in order to produce a profit out of the whole process.

Commodities in order to be produced, and in order to enter the market, have to have a "use value", ie. that someone, somewhere needs them. These products also have to be exchanged with other commodities in different and diverse amounts. They have therefore, to have an "exchange value", ie., "the proportional quantities in which it (the commodity) exchanges with all other commodities.(Marx, 1981, 29).

In order to establish the relationship between the use value and the exchange value of a commodity, a measurement has to be established which also includes an equivalant commodity in it, (that is in comparison) to "a third thing" (Marx, 1981:30). For Marx this "third thing" is the labour power which is embodied in every commodity.

> "A commodity has a value, because it is a crystalization of social labour...{and}... the relative values of commodities.... {are}....determined by the respective quantities or amounts {time} of labour worked up, realized, fixed in them. The correlative quantities of commodities which can be produced in the same time of labour are equal" (ibid:31).

The notion of equality in the time that labour needs to produce different commodities, must be understood in a relative sense. For production and distribution are characterized by uneven technological development and different levels of monopolization in the market. Thus, labour time manifests itself as a relative "average" rather than a fixed measure, in the context of capitalist production as a world system.

Labour power, thus, is a commodity in itself. It is bought in a market and according to the demand and supply mechanism prevailing in this paticular market. However, labour power as a commodity has a unique feature: it is a value-producing force for all other commodities.

But then what is the value of the labour power itself? For Marx it is a part of the cost of the production - that is, the necessary amount of commodities that are required for the production and reproduction of the labour power, as well as, of the labourer himself. The other part of the cost of production include "raw materials and the reproduction and repair of tools: ie., of industrial products whose production costs a certain number of work days, which therefore, represent a certain number of work days" (ibid: 25).

With the increases in the production of commodities, under the scientific technological revolution, "money" appears as the universal commodity ie., a measurement of all commodities, that allows the process of commodity circulation from production to consumption to take place uninterupted.

Capital, then, which is required for the production and the reproduction of social life, is also constituted by commodities and therefore it exists as "a social relation of production" (ibid:29). The specific commodities that constitute capital are "raw materials, instruments of labour, and means of subsistence of all kinds, which are employed in producing new raw materials and new instruments, and new means of subsistence" (ibid:28), and which in themselves constitute "exchange values".

The difference between Capital as a sum of exchange values, and other sums of values, Marx argues, lies in the fact that Capital as a sum of exchange values "preserves itself and multiplies by exchange with direct, living labour power" (ibid:30).

> "Capital does not consist in the fact that accumulated labour serves living labour as a means for new production. It consists in the fact that living labour serves accumulated labour as the means of preserving and multiplying its exchange value". (ibid.:30)

As a result, in capitalist societies Capital and Labour are united in a sense that the one presupposes the other. Their growth depends upon each other; the more Capital grows, the more labour grows" (ibid:32). That growth, however, is not to be considered in terms of numbers of individuals, but rather in terms of wealth accumulation and increases in productivity.

As labour power is bought in the market by the capitalists in exchange for wages (wages regarded as exchange values), it is also presupposed that Capital itself is nothing else but past accumulated labour power in the form of exchange values. As a wage this "past" accumulated capital is,

> "not a share of the worker in the commodities produced by himself. Wages are that part of already existing commodities with which the capitalist buys a certain amount of productive labor-power". (ibid:19)

But then how is profit for the capitalist generated? Classical economics has argued that in the long run commodities are sold in their actual value, that is according to the

labour-time required for the production. Profit therefore, can only be generated if a part of the labour power of the workers employed in the process of commodity production, is not paid to them. According to Engels this is a result of the fact that,

> "the labourer has to submit to the conditions of the contract upon which he entered of "his own free will", and according to which he bound himself to work twelve whole hours for a product of labour which cost only six hours labour"(ibid:11).

But why does this happen? It is because the worker sold his labour-power before entering the production process and after an agreement with the owner of the means of production has been reached. This agreement allows him to use tools and raw materials that he does not own for a fixed period of time.

And as Engels concludes that:

> "In the present state of production, human labour power not only produces in a day a greater value than it itself posesses and costs; but with each new scientific discovery, with each new technical invention, there also rises the surplus of its daily production over its daily cost, while as a consequence there diminishes that part of the working day in which the labourer produces the equivalent of his days' wages, and, on the other hand, lengthens that part of the working day in which he must present labour gratis to the capitalist" (ibid.:12).

That is why an increase in the production of goods does not necessarily mean an increase in the value of the labourer power: it can be the opposite. The introduction of science and technology in the labour process had, as a consequence, to speed up the accumulation, centralization, as well as the monopolization of capital by fewer and fewer capitalists. As the total volume of profit increases from year to year, due to the increase in the exploitation process, the rate of profit fluctuates and at the end, declines. That is because for the increase in the exploitation process the introduction of high technology becomes necessary, which in return requires higher investments. In the end, it results in an increase in the cost value of the constant capital. To counter-balance this loss, capital intensifies its centralization and concentration processes. In return this process has a crisis effect upon the whole structure of capital accumulation as smaller firms and industries are absorbed within the larger ones. This is in fact constitutes a periodical phenomenon in the sociohistorical development of capitalism, which allows the temporary "correction of the fluctuating and declining rate of profit". It takes the form in part of cyclical economic crises that are

followed by periods of growth.

At the same time this process allows the accumulation of super profits, because commodities can also be sold under their value (in average terms), as individual capitalist competition is negated to a monopoly and oligopoly competition in which the regulation of prices and wages becomes easier. This however, takes place without necessarily diminishing the real wages of the labourer. Thus, the labourer might be able to buy the same amount of commodities with his wages that he could buy previously, due to an increase in the real wage. The relative wages of the labourer, however- i.e., "the share of immediate labour value newly created by it, in relation to the share of the capitalist in the form of accumulated labour, that is, capital"(ibid) - suffer from an even wider increase in their gap. Thus, the evaluation of the particular class needs and interests can take place in terms of a relative assessment of the socio-economic development of class, in relation to the development of the other antagonistic class, and not on the basis of the development of the class in itself.

Productive Unproductive Labour.

The basic argument of this formulation developed due to the fact that the service sector of the economy - where the individual members of this sector are primarily occupied with the production and reproduction of ideas, as well as with the administrative and bureaucratic functions of the system - has in the post War World II years, increased to such extent as to develop into an almost particular mode of production. The introduction of a new labour force for the needs of the new and advanced technology, requires an increase in the level of education and scientific training. By incorporating science and knowledge in the production process a different type of production relations has also emerged.

For Marx, however, the economic sphere includes not only the production process, but also the process of exchange, circulation, distribution and consumption of all the kinds of commodities produced under the capitalist mode of production, ie. goods, services, labour power, capital.

Thus, for Marx, "production is simultaneously consumption as well". (Marx, 1970: 125). Consumption therefore, is the purpose of production. But also consumption "recreates the need" for the production of certain goods (ibid: 197). Their unity in this sense is established by the fact that:

> "By its need for repetition consumption leads to the perfection of abilities evolved during the first process of production and converts them into skills..... Production on the other hand (provides) an incentive to consumption, it.... creates the capability to consume as a requirement... Consumption is thus a phase of production (ibid: 198-199).

Distribution on the other hand and in relation to production, is a "reverse aspect of the factors of production" (ibid: 200). The worker takes in return for his participation in the production of commodities part of these commodities in the form of wages. Thus, "the structure of distribution is entirely determined by the structure of production" (ibid.:199).

After a war or a revolution or a crisis, a redistribution of wealth takes place. However, it takes place only in direct relation to the mode of production that the conquering group experiences at that time. Before the distribution of the products of the production, the distribution of the means of production, and of the population on the basis of "various types of production", take place (ibid: 201). This distribution however, is in itself a particular "phase of production", (ibid:205). Finally, exchange and circulation appear as the missing link of these two aspects of the economy.

However, before any exchange of products takes place, an exchange of "skills and productive activities" takes place in the sphere of production. Such exchange "is an essential part of production" (ibid:204). Before consumption appears, raw materials also are exchanged "as a means to manufacture". Finally, exchange "between dealer and dealer" presupposes an organizational structure and "productive activity", both being integral parts of production, in order for this production to happen, (ibid: 204).

In relation to his understanding of the unity of the different aspects of the economy, within the specific mode of production, Marx makes one more point about the nature of production. Production has a double character: a general and a specific.

1. In general, production is the labour process that creates use values.

2. For the specific socio-economic formation - that is capitalism - labour process creates profits or "capital realization". (Sensat, 1979:79).

The ramifications of this distinction is very important for understanding the double nature of labour. Productive labour in general, is any labour that produces use values. Thus, a differentiation can be constructed for labour, that is on the one hand necessary but not productive. In this sense most of the labour done in the sphere of superstructure is unproductive but necessary labour. However, within the two categories of productive and unproductive labour, there are two different kinds of labour: material (manual) and non-material (mental). "Material" here is used by Marx, as a term that describes any real and objectified form of labour. (Kotzias, 1981:43).

Therefore, within productive labour Marx includes both forms of labour, material and mental, as long as they produce use values, (ibid:43). Any form of labour involved in material production of goods - including transportation as well as services, - that appears as commodity is productive labour. These forms of productive labour are inseparable from the individual person, but at the same time can become "objects" of exploitation, ie.; the work of teachers (ibid:43).

In the capitalist mode of production, productive labour is the labour that produces surplus value. What appeared in the general notion of productive labour as the identity of means (labour process) and ends (object of labour), in relation to the result of the labour (product), now appears as separate and distinct production. This production is destined not for the immediate and direct consumption by the producer, but for profit. In the capitalist mode of production, therefore, productive labour is the labour that exchanges directly with capital. Not constant capital though, ie., stocks, machinery, but with variable capital, ie., capital produced after the exchange of surplus value (ibid:45).

A major distinction has also to be made here between wage and income and the relation to the definition of productive labour in capitalism. For only labour paid by wage is productive, i.e., labour bought for profit, whereas labour paid by income is unproductive ie., labour bought for personal consumption, (ibid). In that sense, it can be argued, as Marx has,

that in the capitalist mode of production any labour that is offered to the capitalist as an unpaid labour - surplus labour - is productive labour. Therefore, productive labour in capitalism exists in all spheres of the economy, (ibid 47).

Productive labour in capitalism, however, can only exist as "abstract general labour" ie., labour that creates exchange values. (Marx, 1970:29). This further includes labour which does not have any qualitative characteristics and it is only expressed quantitatively ie., amounts of labour time in the production process. Production, therefore, in itself is also abstract general production, only as abstract general labour. It is in this sense of the individual abstract general labour - measured in time - that the "social character of this labour" emerges (ibid:32).

The Other Classes.

Under the impact of the industrial, scientific and technological revolution and the proletarization of the population of the capitalist societies, intermediate classes have emerged and disappeared.

The criteria, however, for Marx, in his definition of the middle class, are also to be based on "economic criteria". Engels argues that it is the natural tendency of "modern industry" to extinguish the intermediate classes.

> The lower strata of the middle class, the small-trades people, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants - all these classes sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalist, partly because their specialized skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population". (Marx cited in Giddens, 1982:25)

It is, however, in the process of further capital expansion in new spheres of social life, that capitalism reproduces small-capital and small property and business owners, so the phenomenon of middle class still prevails, for the time.

Finally, along with the classes that participate in the labour process, in one form or another, have also existed -

> "The 'dangerous class', the social scum, that passivelly rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society. It may here and there be swept into the

> movement by a proletarian revolution, its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue" (ibid: 24)

In capitalism, however, classes that cannot directly fall into the categories of capitalist/proletarian, Marx argues, is a phenomenon of the historical evolution of the society:

> "Since bourgeois society is, moreover, only a contradictory form of development, it contains relations of earlier societies often merely in very stunted form or even in the form of travesties, e.g., communual ownership". (Marx,1970:211)

These previous societies included in their structure, not only elements of the past, but also of the future class formations. In the case of slavery for example, there were along with the big slave masters, small free peasant, farmers, and craftsmen. In feudalism merchants, craftsmen, organizations in guilds, and even corporations had emerged along with the serfs and the feudalists. Capitalism in its "embryonic form" can also be found in ancient societies where the commodity production afterall had firstly appeared.

In terms of the intellectuals and the "office and professional workers", Lenin had pointed out the nature of their appearance as a "middle estate", a notion which he shared at the time with Kautsky (Lenin cited in Marx, Engels and Lenin, 1972:383). Lenin has noted that capitalism "increasingly deprives the intellectual of his independent position (and) converts him into a hired worker and threatens to lower his living standards" (ibid:383). He argues that the "intelligentsia" constitutes a "transitory and unstable structure of the society", with no outlooks of its own, but rather "attaching themselves partly to bourgeoisie.... and partly to wage workers" (ibid:383). In its overall consideration, the intellectuals, for Lenin, have a "contradictory position" within the capitalist mode of production.

The Definition of Class in Itself.

Classes, therefore, for classical Marxism are groups of people that can be distinguished on the basis of four characteristics:

1. Their position within a historically defined socio-economic formation with a specific mode of production.
2. Their relation to the means of production.

3. Their role in the social organization of the labour process

4. The type of income and the source from which they received it. (Lenin, Col. Works, vol. 20:421).

A fifth criterion can also be incorporated: the size of income of each individual member of the society. However, this cannot be a reliable criterion. The speed by which the scientific and technological revolution develops the productive activity of labour, and by the incorporation in the labour process of new technology, the labour process becomes more intensified and thus extends the labour day. That is, in the same working time more surplus value is produced. Therefore, the exact calculation of whether a particular labour is paid over or below or equal to its actual value, would require the development of particular indicators for each particular activity. As an overall assessment, however, Marx accepts, the Classical Economy's assertion that on the average workers are paid the value of their work. Finally, it is necessary in the actual empirical counting of the members of the classes, for all four criteria to be considered as important and as inseparable from each other.

B. THE IDEOLOGICAL FORMATION OF CLASS.

For classical Marxism, ideology is a particular form of consciousness, and as Marx and Engels have argued, consciousness can be nothing else but "conscious existence". Ideology, therefore, can only be a particular form of conscious existence. processes and phenomena of the division of labour. Thus, it can only be a "particularistic existence" to which an appropriate consciousness corresponds. Classes, on the other hand, as social phenomena express both the existing forms of the division of labour as well as the different modes of life which not only center around the particular location. As such, a class is the highest manifestation of a "particular existence". The class-conscious existence on the other hand, expresses both the particularity and universality of classes.

This cognition of the world on the basis of one's particular position within a mode of production is the first precondition for the formation of ideological reflection. Marx and Engels for example, in their critique of Saint Sancho, a "Young Hegelian" who was

advocating that reflection should become a vocation for all individuals if they wanted to achieve "self-determination" argued, that his claims were, "merely an apology for the vocation forced on every individual in the world as it has existed so far (Marx and Engels, 1970b: 309).

For Marx and Engels the division of labour takes its most expressive form in a society when it manifests itself in the form of the division between mental and manual labour. The "Young Hegelians" advocated that reflection, that is mental labour instead of manual labour, is the way towards "self realization" and "self emancipation". For Marx and Engels the "Young Hegelians" were disillusioned for, first they substitute one aspect of the division of labour with the other, and second, they place the individual, rather than the social, in the center of their concerns, and as such they comprehend "self-emancipation, realization, and determination" as imaginary not real categories. Third, they substitute the real historical liberation of humans from capitalism, with an imaginary escape from this "bad world".

Against this position Marx and Engels argued that:

> " What is here asserted in the form of a vocation, a designation, is precisely the negation of the vocation... ie., the only actually existing vocation - hence the negation of vocation altogether" (ibid:309).

And they went on to propose that:

> "The all-around realization of the individual will only cease to be conceived as an idea, a vocation, etc., when the impact of the world which stimulates the real development of the abilities of the individual is under the control of the individuals themselves" (ibid:309).

The perpetuation of naturalness, however, of the ideological processes in reflection becomes a purposeful activity on the part of the ruling classes and the state by which their collective will is expressed and applied. This leads towards the second explanation offered by classical Marxism about the existence of the ideology as an illusory consciousness of a class-divided society.

For Marx and Engels, a new class which fights historically an old ruling class in order to overthrow the former has to come into alliance with all the other classes and individuals of a society (Marx and Engels, 1970b: 52). This new revolutionary class therefore, would have to present its class interest, as "the general interest, which in the first moment it is forced to

do" (ibid:52). The relation of the particular interests of the other classes, and individuals with the particular interests of the revolutionary class, find their unity, not in terms of the actual interests themselves. This unity is expressed through the mediation of other illusory entities, such as "democracy", the state, the franchise, and the political unity of the classes against the rule of the old class . This unity is also expressed in the formation of particular institutions and organizations of the society, which in the end the revolutionary class would have to develop in order to place the society as a whole under their rule (ibid:52).

In the case, however, in which the old class rule is substituted with a new class rule - as in the case of the bourgeois revolution - according to Marx and Engels, a constant intervention by the state is required in order to perpetuate the ideas of the "general interest" and the will of the old revolutionary class within society and for all the classes, despite the fact that neither the "general will" nor the revolutionary quality is expressed by this class anymore.

> "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: ie., the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force... During the time the aristocracy was dominant, the concepts honour, loyalty etc., were dominant, during the dominance of the bourgeoisie the concepts of freedom, equality, etc." (ibid: 68-69).

In their turn the ruling ideas, for Marx and Engels, "are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations". Therefore, for example, when the revolutionary bourgeoisie liberated humanity from feudalism, it freed the "development of production and the further exploitation of man by man" from the "guilds and the fetters" that the previous order had installed on them (Marx and Engels, 1976, vol 2:102).

> "Liberation [then] is a historical and not a mental act and it is brought about by historical conditions" (Marx and Engels, 1976, vol 1:27).

To this movement the phenomena of consciousness, in that epoch, correspond to its development, only to be "removed again when this development has advanced enough" (ibid:27). The ideological illusory reflection, therefore, in a class-divided society, has two sources and two modes of expression: a "particularistic" by which the world is comprehended by one's position within a mode of production; and a "universal" that does not correspond to one's particular class interests, but within which - in a revolutionary period - finds a

temporal expression in the form of a general will, perpetuated thereafter by the conscious intervention of the new ruling class.

Only in a time of revolutionary transformation of a society, therefore, the ideological illusory comprehension of the world expressed as a "general will" reflects the true movement of sociohistorical reality. What however, has intervened in the emergence of the convergence between the ideological and the true (scientific) reflection, is the accumulated experience and knowledge of a particular class about the society as a whole, and of the limitations that the previous system had installed upon the potential development of productive activity. The particularity in the understanding of these limitations will exist as long as society is class-divided. For Marx and Engels, the proletariat is the only historically emerged class that in order to liberate itself, has not only to substitute one form of exploitation with another, one form of property with another, the rule of one class by another. It has to abolish these altogether. As such it will not emancipate only itself, but the society as a whole (Marx and Engels, 1976, vol.2: 142-145).

This is due to the position of the proletariat within the last historically antagonistic mode of production: capitalism. For under capitalism, the socialization of the production process has reached such an extent that in order for production to carry on, the entire society would have to participate in it. As such the proletarization of the population affects the entire society and forces its members to join the working class as workers or as potential future ones. On the other hand, it further concentrates and accumulates capital as the private property of even fewer individuals. These two antithetical processes, for Marx and Engels, constitute one of the basic contradictions of capitalist society, and propel its historical transformation. Within this context the universality of the labour process corresponds to the universality of the proletarization process.

The life process and life activity of the individual proletarians, despite the historical zig-zags and failures in their historical development, is assumed to bring them continuously into closer approximation with their historical role as a class. These processes are, according to Lenin, the preconditions for the transformation of ideology from an illusory reflection of

the world to a scientific one (Lenin, 1973, vol.1:327-328). Again the proletariat's class consciousness expressed as the general and universal interest of a society undergoing a revolutionary transformation is pressupposed. This proposal by Lenin, is based on Marx and Engels' argument.

> That under favourable circumstances some individuals are able to rid themselves of their local narrow-mindedness is by no means due to individual imagining that they have got rid of their local narrow-mindedness, but it is only due to the fact that their real empirical life individuals, actuated by empirical needs, have been able to bring about world intercourse" (Marx and Engels, 1970b:282).

The transformation, according to classical Marxism, of class ideology of the proletariat, from an illusionary to a scientific basis, is not predetermined by its position in the capitalist mode of production. For the proletariat as a class in itself and not yet for itself within the capitalist mode of production , like all other classes, is subjected to its generic tendencies, i.e,: division, competition, illusion. What is presupposed by the perspective, is its potential overcoming of ideology as illusion altogether, a fact provided by this class' antagonistic and contradictory position in the capitalist mode of production. Thus, Marx and Engels argue that the proletariat by going through "the stern but steeling school of labour" might achieve this convergence.. Therefore -

> "It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat, at the moment regards as its aim. It is a question of what the proletariat is, and what, in accordance with this being, it will historically be compelled to do" (Marx and Engels, 1975:44).

Unions and Parties.

The realization of one's class position is an historical act that depends upon the individual's accumulated, experience and knowledge. In doing so, they are in a constant competition with other members of their class, and in antagonistic competition with other classes as well as with the state as a whole that expresses -collectively - the interests and the ideas of the ruling class. The ideological development from the illusion of one's particular class realities to a universal and correct scientific understanding of one's position and role within a given social reality, is a dialectically united and contradictory process.

Thus, Engels argues that:

> "The history of science is the history of the gradual clearing away of their nonsense [ideological] or rather of its replacement by fresh but always less absurd nonsense" (Marx and Engels, 1976:493).

Ideology, on the other hand, as a particularistic form of consciousness of individuals that are subject to division of labour and which through its development form classes, becomes a material force by which they become able to act upon this development, only to repeat the process all over again. (ibid:493)

The ideological praxis of a class such as the proletariat is therefore "revolutionary" like every other praxis of any other class (ibid:13). What distinguishes this revolutionary praxis of this class compared to every other, is its potentiality in qualitatively changing the course of historical development, no longer to be based upon the exploitation of one individual by another, but to rely upon their cooperation and solidarity.

But this, before anything else and simultaneously with the everyday practices of the members of this class would require the transformation of the ideological illusory consciousness of a class in itself to an ideology - world view - which as a continuously higher approximation reflects the universal interests of this class as the "general" interests of the whole society. How is it then possible to overcome the particularity of a class existence and to transform it into a universal proclamation of society's interests?

Marx has argued that:

> "The advances of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet, the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products (Marx and Engels, 1976, vol. 2:145).

It is not, therefore, simply the everyday life of the proletariat that by itself will transform capitalist society. But as a result of and in conjunction with everyday life the "revolutionary association" of that class' will become the primary conscious medium for change. Historically and theoretically, the development of the "revolutionary association" of a politically united working class under capitalism has proven to be multiform and multidimensional. Engels, in "The Conditions of the Working Class in England, 1844"

(1973:250-264), in a comprehensive summary of the history of workers' "revolutionary associations" discusses some of the more important factors in their emergence and development.

Crime was the first form of revolt of the workers against the omnipotent social power of the still revolutionary bourgeoisie, especially theft. The criminal however, as a single individual could only be crushed by the rulers of society who really could have the entire society rally with them against offending thieves.

The first isolated incidences of a unified revolt of workers, as a class, was to be found in their opposition of the introduction of machinery. These incidents, however, were isolated and local in nature and they were soon controlled. After the introduction of the Reform Bill in 1824, the House of Commons in England which, according to Engels, had "legally sanctioned the distinction between bourgeoisie and proletariat and made the bourgeoisie the ruling class" (ibid:251), gave the workers the right to free association. The objective of these associations was first of all to unite the workers as one against the capitalist, and to regulate wages according to a universal scale in relation to the profits of the capitalists. Second, associations were trying to limit the number of apprentices and to control the introduction of machinery, as well as to provide assistance to the unemployed, in order to secure high wages.

Organizationally, they developed trends and processes that allowed the identification of their members and the recruitement - even through force - of as many workers as possible. Attempts also were made to form one union for all of England. In relation to the capitalists, they were negotiating with them in order to achieve their aims, and if that was not possible the workers sought to force capitalists through a strike to do so.

Legal strikes, however, had proven not to be very effective, especially due to recruitment by the capitalists of strike breakers with whom the unions were always in a mortal conflict.

For Engels:

> "The history of these unions is a long series of defeats of the working-men, interrupted by a few isolated victories. All these efforts naturally cannot alter the economic law according to which wages are determined by the relation between supply and demand in the labour market" (ibid:254).

Operating within the laws of the capitalist market, the unions, in the final analysis, were powerless. Strikes, however, did not stop because, according to Engels, the workers had to protest against the reduction in their living standards.

> "They feel bound to proclaim that they, as human beings, shall not be made to bow to social circumstances, but social conditions ought to yield to them as human beings; because silence on their part would be a recognition of these social conditions, an admission of the right of the bourgeoisie to exploit the workers in good times and let them starve in bad ones" (ibid:254).

Unions, however, by operating within the laws of a capitalist market that regulates in the long run the rate of wages had limited potentiality in overcoming adverse working and living conditions. At any rate, for Engels, unions

> "must go beyond that [the regulations of the rate of wages] unless they are prepared to recede again and to allow competition among themselves to reappear" (ibid:256).

The limitation of the trade unions as the "revolutionary association" of the working class were also recognized by Marx. For him

> "Trade Unions originally sprang up from the spontaneous attempts of workmen removing or at least checking... competition, in order to conquer such terms of contract as might raise them above the conditions of mere slaves" (Marx and Engels, 1976: vol. 2:82).

For Marx the trade unions "unconsciously" became centers of organization of the working class, by which the "guerilla fights" against capital were carried out (ibid:203). What was required for them, however, was to become

> "organized agencies for superceding the very system of wages labour and capital rule" (ibid:203).

As such for Marx, the unions proved to be "centers of resistance against the encroachments of capital." But

> "They fail partially from an injudicious use of their power. They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system" (ibid:76).

Instead of that, Marx proposed that the unions would have to use "their organized force as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class" (ibid:76). To do that, the unions would have to overcome the local narrowness and to convince the people that they did so (ibid:83). Further, they would have to broaden the scope of their recruitments and

associations to include "the non-society men into their ranks" and to cooperate with all other trades. (ibid:76)

In his instructions to the delegates of the International Working Men's Association (IWMA). Marx proposed that:

> "It is the business of the International Working Men's Association to combine and generalize the spontaneous movements of the working classes" (ibid:81).

Marx and Engels defended the IWMA from the various attacts on the basis that this association was in fact overcoming the sectarian and spontaneous development of working classes and transformed it into a unified and conscious one (ibid:271).

Within this theoretical analysis and practical efforts, Marx and Engels tried to find the highest possible and most effective form of working class "revolutionary association". They produced the pretext for the emergence of the political party of the proletariat. In their 1848 "Manifesto of the Communist Party" they outline the basic features of the political organization of the working class as a party. The main thrust of it, apart from the summary which they provided of the materialist conception of history (in which history is described as the history of class struggles) - is that in order for the proletariat to emancipate itself and the society as a whole, a conscious political organization is required that will unite the class on the basis of a "scientific ideology" and which will allow the generalization and universalization on a revolutionary base of the interests of this class as the interests of the whole society.

About twenty years later in a confidential communication to the First International Marx argued that the revolution would occur in one country first and then spread to the others.

> "Although revolutionary initiative will probably come from France, England alone can serve as the lever for a serious economic revolution" (Marx and Engels, 1976, vol. 2: 174).

He went even further to suggest that for an economically dependant and underdeveloped country (such as Ireland) the revolution emerges more easily.

> "In Ireland, this is a hundred times easier since the economic struggle there is concentrated exclusively on landed property, since this struggle is at the same time national, and since the people there are more revolutionary and exasperrated than in England" (ibid:125).

This statement will be furthered elaborated into an outline of revolutionary theory and praxis, by Lenin, which will count for the conditions of the imperialist development of capitalism.

The main reason, however, for the continuous failures of the working class in unions and in parties, to revolutionary transform capitalist society is mainly due to the fact of their internal divisions that are constantly reproduced within the competitive and antagonistic mode of life of the civil society. As a result a particularistic instead of a universal class consciousness is continously reproduced.

That is why an important point needs to be realized here concerning the emphasis of "the political" aspect of the organized working class as opposed to "the economic" aspect which describes the class in itself.

Marx argues that:

> "The 'political' movement of the working class naturally has as its final aim the conquest of 'political power' for it. For this a 'previous organization' of the working class, an organization developed to a certain degree, is naturally necessary which grows out of its economic forces." (Marx, cited by Lozovsky, 1935:20).

This movement, according to Marx, appears as a "pressure from without", not directly from the economic confrontation of labour and capital, but as a force which confronts capital on an universal base that goes beyond labour itself (ibid:20). The organization that carries the bulk of this movement also appears as being "from the outside" of the working class in order to universalize the economic and political struggle of the class.

This, however, does not mean that the trade unions have no use or that they must be overtaken by a political party. As Lozovsky (1935:25) argues,

> "Marx understood primacy over economics in such a way that, in the first instance, he places in the political all those tasks of the trade unions, higher than the private corporation tasks; and secondly, that the political party of the proletariat must define the economic tasks and lead the trade union organization itself" (ibid).

Lenin, on the other hand, had followed the same line of thought with Marx and Engels, but within a different social and historical context; i.e., that of Russia and imperialism. He further developed the role of the trade unions within the "socialist state" and the "dictatorship of the proletariat".

For Lenin, the trade unions were

> "(a) organizations that must embrace the whole class; (b) They must, politically, educate the masses in the spirit of community, raising them to the level of understanding their general class tasks; (c) they should link up the Party with the masses: (d) they should wage the struggle against Capital under the leadership of the revolutionary party of the proletariat" (Lozovsky, 1935:175).

As such, for Lenin, the trade unions before anything else were a "school of communism". School here is understood not in its actual definition, but as class schools which trained the working class both in revolutionary praxis and theory (Lenin, 1978:420-452).

Lenin's most important contribution, however, in his theoretical and practical considerations of the trade unions is related to his analysis of the "spontaneous" and "conscious" organization of the working class. In "What Is To Be Done" (ibid:68-125), Lenin argues that,

> "The spontaneous working class movement is trade unionism,...and trade unionism means the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie....The working-class movement only then grows out of its embryonic state, its infancy, and becomes a class movement when it makes the transition to the political struggle".

In his early argument with the "Economists", a group within the early social democratic movement in Russia, Lenin emphasized the primacy of the political struggle over the economic as the road to the emancipation of the working class (ibid:14). He also argued that the promotion of "political neutrality" of unions reflected a passive acceptance of simple bourgeois democracy as socialism (ibid:12). This notion, for Lenin, was in fact, accepting the integration and cooperation of labour and capital, thereby subjecting the working class to the rule of the bourgeoisie.

Lenin also defended the right of the political independence of the trade unions from the party in the sense that the working class cannot be forced into communist ideology but must develop towards it. In that sense he criticized "union leadership" which had become bureaucrats (the new labour aristocracy), and who were functioning within the working class as "a social mainstay for the bourgeoisie" (ibid:19-20). He extended his criticism to reformistic, anarchistic and anarcho-syndalist ideas that prevailed in trade union politics in his

times, producing delays and diversions in the revolutionary development of the proletariat (ibid:21).

Finally, he opposed Trotsky's idea "of militarizing the trade unions" and the introduction of "barracks discipline in the factories", along with his (Trotsky's) notion of a "governmentalization" of the unions and a replacement of their leaders from the above. For Lenin, Trotsky's ideas were weakening socialist democracy and the participation of the masses in the building of socialism (ibid:94).

On the other hand, Lenin's idea of the political party of the proletariat is directly based upon that of Marx and Engels. The political party is a force "from without" of the working class emerging out of the economic necessities of that class. Its avant guarde role is not given but acquired in praxis and theory. Revolutionary theory is necessary for a revolutionary praxis to develop. Democratic centralism as the decision making process within the party -in which the minority has to accept the rule of the majority and in which the higher levels of the party (with first of all its congress) exercise their authority upon the lower one, is also a necessary measure in order to secure party unity and avoid sectarian tendencies and ideological distortions.

It is not the party that makes the revolution, but the working class which is in alliance with the majority of people in one country and who, in their absolute majority, have accepted its leadership. "Avant guardism", therefore, is not given but accomplished as a result of conscious and consistent revolutionary mass activity.

Lenin had also followed in his theory and praxis what Marx described as being his own discoveries:

> "(1) That the existence of classes is only bound up with a particular historical phase in the development of production. (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat. (3) That this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society "(Marx, Engels and Lenin, 1972:284).

As such, socialism and socialist state is only a transient movement towards communist society, within which the proletariat establishes its rule. The socialist revolution has to "smash" the bourgeois state and establish its own. This state, however, has a special

character: it withers away. That is because, according to Marx and Engels,

> "Communism is for us not a state of affairs which is to be established, an ideal to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call communism the real movement which abolishes the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from the now existing premise" (Marx and Engels, 1970:57).

At any rate however, this road to communism, for Lenin, is not a one-way street. In his essay "On Marxist Tactics", Lenin discusses how the working class orgainzation in their class struggle against the bourgeoisie, would have to take into consideration the peculiarities, and the uneveness, as well as the anarchy which characterizes capitalist development (Lenin, 1975:22).

For that the "different forms" of struggle in their "defensive" or "agressive" appearance should be taken under consideration as a whole that allows the "transition" from one stage of the struggle to another "higher" one (ibid:22).

> "by going more carefully into the expediency of any given action, by changing the form of struggle, substituting...one for another, the general tendency being to rise to higher forms" (ibid:22).

Lenin's proposals in their essence provide an important description of the actual tendencies that, regardless of any theoretical elaboration, are taking place within the working class movement. What in fact these arguments by Lenin suggest is the non-linearity of the political and ideological as well as structural and organizational development of the working class.

Trade unions, labour co-operatives, the political party, the different forms of alliance and coalitions of the working class organizations, all of them in fact repeatedly express and manifest the multidimensionality in the development of the working class movement. Further, this multidimensionality does not only exist as an "outside feature" of the mode of appearance of working class development, but also, and more importantly, it exists in "its inside" mode of becoming. It represents the "inter alia", essential reflections, expressions and manifestations of the working class movement as a whole. This movement in itself historically, will determine the necessary mode of appearance of the particular forms of working class organizations.

In that sense, the historical multidimensionality and of the working class movement that tends towards its emancipation, according to the theory, is a total process which is not outside its initial course. On the other hand, it points out the actual limitations of this process and how the possibilities of delays, failures, and destruction emerge from within the movement itself in its historical struggle with its context.

In that sense, the one aspect of the contradiction cannot substitute for the other. The priority, in the final analysis of the actual, the economic, the immediate, does not mean that the cultural, the political, the reflective, is secondary in any literate sense. For a class that is supposed to emancipate not only itself but the entire society, and change qualitatively the course of historical development, these "secondary" aspects become the actual medium through and by which the intervention upon this course by the working class becomes possible.

Again, however, this intervention can only take place within the limitation of the "primary" aspect - the stage of the development of the actual material conditions of existence and the immediate and corresponding relations to it that have been installed from within and upon the class and the society. From this analysis stems the fact that it is necessary to understand these limitations and potentialities of the working class movement in relation to its actual sociohistorical context.

In any case the danger for a misunderstanding of the histical essence of the working class culture, is that civil society might be approached as a fixed and eternal totality within which the working class has been incorporated, either as a failure or as a contributor to its infinite becoming. What, instead, has been suggested here is an understanding of the actual historical movement of the working class from "the inside": as contradictory and antagonistic to civil society. This approach, therefore, perceives the different modes in which the working class has been historically reproduced, within the civil society, as "moments" of its own uneven and contradictory process of development that, nevertheless, continuously tends towards its total becoming.

Considering Class Culture.

The division of the class "in itself" and "for itself", along with the major class division of civil society into proletarians and capitalists has an important impact upon the culture of this type of society. As Lenin has argued,

> "The elements of democratic and socialist culture are present, if only in rudimentary form, in every national culture, since in every nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism. But every nation also posesses a bourgeois culture (and most nations a reactionary and clerical culture as well) in the form, not merely of elements, but of the dominant culture. Therefore, the general national culture is the culture of the landlords, the clergy and the bourgeoisie...In advancing the slogan of "the international culture of democracy and of the world working class movement", we take from each national culture only its democratic and socialist elements; we take them only and absolutely in opposition to the bourgeois nationalism of each nation" (Lenin, 1983, 114).

For Lenin, the historical contradiction in the working class as class in itself and for itself remains constant within the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie in civil society. Oppositional working class culture that stems from the actual mode of life of this class within civil society differs qualitatively from the working class cultural opposition as a conscious mode of struggle.

Thus, bourgeois cultural dominance expresses the transformation of this class from one that exists in itself, to one that exists for itself. Nevertheless, for both classes this initial distinction, as long as the context remains the same, is constantly reproduced within the historical movement of each class towards its total cultural realization. For the working class this distinction is always greater. Thus, for Lenin, the level of politicalization and consequently of organization of a specific class becomes the criterion for the degree of its cultural manifestation.

On the other hand, the political essence of class culture allows the transformation of both working class and bourgeois culture from a particularistic manifestation to an universal one. As such, it transcends the boundary lines of each class and finds expression in the modes of life and struggle of individuals with different class backgrounds.

In return, a particular class culture, incorporates elements from other class cultures that might represent past, present or future cultural characteristics, which to one or the other

extent exist in a dialectical unity and contradiction within the cultural interests of a given class. In that sense the continuation and discontinuity between the universal reproduction of human culture as a whole, and the appearance of particularistic class cultures, finds its manifestation within the existing system of class cultures.

The question which emerges from this discussion is how the essence of class culture is historically produced within civil society and of what this essence is composed of? To answer these questions it seems necessary first of all to consider what classical Marxism has assured to be the essence of human culture in general and how this essence has become possible.

Woolfson has summarized classical Marxism's understanding of human culture as "a measure of man's humanization".

> "At every stage of historical development, culture is a measure of man's humanization, the degree to which he has separated himself from his animal origins, the extent to which he has humanized nature and his own being as a part of nature through his labour activity "(Woolfson, 1982: 81).

Leacock, on the other hand, summarized classical Marxist understanding of the significance of labour in the development and survival of the species as follows:

> "It was through labor that humanity created itself as a skillful large-brained, language-using animal, and through labor that it created an elaborate cultural superstructure. The very impressiveness of mankind's mental achievements, however, has obscured the fundamental significance of labour. Furthermore, the separation of planning for labor from the labor itself, a development of complex society, contributed to the rise of an idealistic world outlook, one that explains people's actions as 'rising out of thoughts instead of their needs'" (Leacock, cited in Woolfson:72).

The development of labour itself however, demonstrates the fact that not only objective reality (natural-social) is the object of labour, but also labour itself. It is in this sense that Marx has argued that by changing its environment, humanity changes itself. The different form of development in the division of labour, as well as the distribution of time and energy within the different forms of labour, testify to the actual processes of human intervention and activation upon the quality of labour itself. Therefore, for Marx:

> "Economy of time, to this all economy ultimately reduces itself. Society likewise has to distribute its time in a purposeful way, in order to achieve a production adequate to its overall needs.... economy of time, along with the planned distribution of labour time among the various branches of production, remains the first economic law on the basis of communual production. It becomes law, there, to an even higher degree" (Marx cited in Woolfson, 1982: 72-73).

However, the answer to the question, how does humanity act upon its own praxis and what are the cultural consequence of this activation, can lead to the understanding of both the mode of appearance, as well as, of the essence of a revolutionary class culture. The complexity, diversity and contradictions of these phenomena and processes have been described by Marx as follows:

> "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but rather directly encountered, given and transmitted from past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves, and things, in creating something that has never existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from their names, battle cries and costumes, in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honored disguise and this borrowed language" (Marx cited in Selsam, 1970: 62)

Thus, culture, becomes possible through and above all by human labour. Labour on the other hand, allows the survival and development of the human species. Culture, in return, expresses the qualitative level that the relationship between development and survival reached in every different historical stage of human existence. It is in this sense that culture becomes a measure of "man's level of humanization" as the historical development of humankind through and by labour is the necessary precondition for its survival.

Culture, therefore, appears in the generalized form of that mode of praxis by and through which the emancipatory appropriation of the collective past - in everyday life - becomes possible within the new historical circumstances. In return this counts for the revolutionary cultural activity of every class.

In the process of the collective reproduction of their past, humans in fact demonstrate their willingness to create the new. This willingness is, as Engels has argued, characterized by "passion or deliberation". It is expressed in a multitude of forms, ranging from "ideal motives" to "personal heatrace". (Engels, cited in Selsam, 1970:64) These motives constitute, as averages for every particular individual, the form by which the real motives in history - class needs, interests, expectations, aspirations - appear in the consciousness of the individual members of a given class (ibid:66). Classes advanced their real class motives, not only through their direct political ideological application, but also through imaginative

experimentation with the different and multitudinal forms in which the class motives have appeared. Thus, it becomes possible to broaden the support basis of their class struggles. (See Appendix B, Fig. 1).

Imaginative experimentation with the real class motives are in fact the means by which the political culture of a class organization renews its own public support (Gramsci, 1980:211). This essential process towards the cultural realization of a class is becoming institutionalized within the culture of the class, as a result of the conscious production, reproduction, and creation of itself, and in order to reflect, express, and manifest the level of its politicalization. (See Appendix B, fig.2).

The historically accumulated experience of a class is reflected in its continuously emerging organizational structures. Experience transferred into organizational structures by the praxis of a class is a dialectically united and contradictory phenomenon. Thus, experience as culture of an organized revolutionary class manifests its praxial and symbolic elements as the ideological expression and the scientific reflection of its essential class motives.

Through the ideological expression of the praxial and symbolic element of its cultural consciousness the class becomes able to (systematically) organize and eventually popularize its aesthetic conceptualization of history which refers to the particular perception of a class about what constitutes a desirable mode of life. Through this process its cultural past, present and future becomes idealized. The process of idealization of the cultural existence of a class allows the overall self-assessment of its historical position, and contribution to the development of human culture in general.

On the other hand, scientific reflection of the praxial and symbolic elements in the consciousness of a class is directly linked with the development of the concrete programs of action and of organization aimed towards the sociohistorical advancement of the class's essential interests. The forms by which the scientific and ideological organization of the praxial and symbolic elements of class culture takes place constitute the mode of the cultural appearance of a particular class. Further, the aesthetic expression and the reflected knowledge of the class experience are perceived to manifest the modes through which class

culture appears to change historically.

Class culture, therefore, as a specific phenomenon, seen from the "inside" of a class that moves towards its total and universal cultural realization, is above all the mode of praxis by and through which the class becomes conscious about its social and historical role in the course of class struggle. In relation to that, the way this consciousness is reflected, expressed, and manifested in its institutions and organizations, provides the basis for characterizing the essence of its culture as militant, radical, critical, passive, or revolutionary.

A Topological Model of Class Culture.

From this general discussion of the universal emergence of class culture under capitalism, it can be metacognitively observed that development of a class culture is directly linked with the ability of classes to adapt themselves to the new circumstances; and to reject what threatens their cultural existence and progress. (See Appendix C, Fig.1).

Where classes experience the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie, the class context of this society is mostly determined by the way that the ruling class has socially implemented both its essence (mainly manifestated in the relations of production) and in its institutionalized system of control. On the other hand, the reproduction of the class cultural context will be ultimately connected with the ability of the ruling class to continue the progressive accumulation of wealth, the expansion of its influence in all the spheres of social life.

In relation to that, the perpetuation of the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie depends on the ability of this class to adapt itself to new circumstances. Therefore, it would need to successfully combat and eventually to incorporate within its hegemony, all these forces and phenomena which appear as possible contributors or challengers to its hegemony - such as - the working class resistance to capital expansion, the cyclical crises, the social movements.

Historically, this has been possible due to a continuous increase in the division of labour and the competition between the different factions of labour. Division and

competition therefore, appear as necessities for the progressive existence of the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie in capitalist civil society. However, the reproduction of the culture of a class-divided society results in the emergence and formation of antagonistic and contradictory class cultures and of sub-cultures which in varying degrees reject the cultural hegemony of the bourgeois, and instead challenge it by promoting their own cultural interests- such as the farmers movements, the intellectual movements, the women's movements, the youth and peace movements.

The incorporation of these forces within the hegemonic rule of the dominant class is a contradictory process, and it pressupposes the initial rejection of their challenge, and then their consequent incorporation, as long as they have been stripped of any dangerous edge. Simultaneously, a coercive legal system emerges which limits the cultural action of antagonistic class cultures within civil society, especially when this culture has reached a mass level which challenges the hegemony of the ruling class.

Coercion, however, as a means of forced incorporation appears also in the form of measures happening outside the legal system itself. This proposition is closely related to the idea of the "general will", expressed by a previously revolutionary class which perpetuates the various elements of this "general will", such as freedom, fraternity, equality although in an illusionary form. In that sense, the ideological expression of bourgeois culture transcends the boundaries of the class as such. As a result of this all encompassing social domination, the class culture of the bourgeoisie remains the dominant cultural force of the civil society.

However, what a cultural element might signify for one class does not mean it signifies the same for all the others. In return this asymptotic manifestation of class cultural elements, that appear in the same external form and yet symbolizing different even antagonistic cultural tendencies, becomes a significant area for class struggle over their meaning and content.

However, as the processes of persuasion and coercion are continuously produced within civil society, bourgeois cultural hegemony ranges from a social democratic, to a liberal democratic, and finally to a fascist phase. In direct antagonistic opposition and as an

alternative to civil society as a whole, the socialist cultural ideology eventually emerges. Its content is constituted by the rejection of all the essential modes of culture of the civil society - such as - exploitation, competition, division, individuality and the promotion in their place of co-operation, collectivity, solidarity, socializaton. Further, it is characterized by the emancipatory appropriation of the collective, and co-operative cultural elements which existed within civil society. This kind of understanding of the cultural make-up of civil society as an ever changing, historically, entity provides the possibility for a recognition of the relative nature of its cultural formations along with the understanding of its possible revolutionary emancipation. (See Appendix C, Fig.2)

However, the content, and eventually the form, that the cultural existence of a class takes, is first of all linked with the particular standards of life that this class experiences within the civil society. It is on this basis of the realization of the level of one's standards of life that the progressive cultural movement towards the qualitative transformation of a class' particular conditions of life emerges. The standards of living of a class, therefore, reflect the cultural and historical existence, and the particular cultural position that this class has experienced within the old civil society. On the other hand, the direction of the cultural movement of a class towards a different quality of life reflects, amongst other things, its historical role, as well as the significance of this class's cultural movement to human culture in general.(See Appendix C, Fig. 2)

The cultural adaptation of the classes within the context of civil society and on the basis of their position and role in it, (regardless of the specific means that this adaptation is achieved), requires first of all a degree of a broad class cultural consensus with the overall cultural processes that take place within the civil society. Second it requires the rejection of cultural processes that delimit its movement. This rejection, eventually, might resume into a struggle with other opposing classes. Broad class cultural concession on the position and the standards of life of classes within civil society allows the overall cultural legitimization of civil society in which the existing bourgeois order is conservatively preserved.

However, within the broad class cultural concession, and under the impact of the new historical circumstances the need for a progressive movement towards a different quality of life within the limits of civil society emerges in the form of social critique. This critique is aimed at changing the existing standards of life through reform so that the cultural consession of civil society will be maintained and further evolved. These changes, however, in the standards of life and consequently of social relations in civil society, do not produce any fundamental alterations to its essence.

In periods characterized by the intensification of class struggle then a reactive cultural movement emerges in order to secure the immediate survival of civil society. That is because in such periods of crisis and polarization, alternative cultural visions have been entrenched within different segments of the old civil society. These processes evolve out of the excessive coercive policies, as well as from deep splits in the forces that express alternative visions of society. What, therefore, remains as the only possible alternative, is the subjugation of all the struggling cultural forces under the extreme expression of bourgeois hegemony within the civil society and an easing of the class conflict altogether.

Within the same condition a reaction for survival emerges, the negation of civil society for a qualitatively different form of development also emerges. Negative development that rejects civil society altogether is the result of the increase in class struggle and the intensification of the contradictions between the progressive evolution of civil society towards a different quality of life with the relative diminishing of the overall standards of living within it. The conscious realization of this contradiction leads to the need for cultural emancipation of the working class, which is first of all mostly affected, and second, emancipation of the society as a whole.

As the working class within civil society becomes more numerous because of the proletarization process; and as the standards of life of the great majority of people continually diminish, crises increase - a revolutionary cultural movement might emerge that seeks the cultural redirection of the society.

At any rate, as crisis and normalization periods and therefore, struggle and concessions are continuously reproduced within a civil society, the legitimizing, critical, reactionary, and negating cultural formations are also reproduced within the cultural content of every class. However, the culture of legitimization antagonizes and contradicts the culture of negation. Both exist as the main cultural antagonistic formations in the civil society. Which one will prevail depends upon the balance of power that would be achieved at the expense of the other two class cultural modes, i.e., the reactionary and critical. Further, the question of the emergence of a revolutionary or a counter-revolutionary process and the establishment of one or the other as the dominant culture will depend, in the final analysis not upon the cultural processes themselves, but upon the totality of historical circumstances within which these two directions emanate from.

IV. CHAPTER IV: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE AFL.

"I was standing up on a hill and I saw the Old to approach, but it was coming as New...
so the Old made its appearance as new disguised but brought the New
with it in its triumphant possession to present it as Old.
The New was walking chained and dressed with rags; revealing its divine limbs"
(B. Brecht, Poems for Class Struggle 1974:45).

The AFL Before 1979.

The formation of the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) in 1912 was in fact the expression of the need of the Alberta workers "to make themselves heard in the councils of Government in Edmonton" (Caragata, 1979:35). Earlier attempts of the workers in the province to unite around a political candidate had failed mostly due to the existing ideological splits within the labour movement of the time (ibid:29-34). The main concern, according to Caragata, of Alberta's workers during the early years of the 19th century, was the development of "a decent workers compensation act that would provide financial security for injured workers and their family" (ibid:36). This concern largely reflected the sentiments of mine workers, after a series of industrial accidents and explosions in the mine fields of the province.

In the founding convention of the AFL in the Lethbridge Trades Hall there were forty delegates that rallied around two different political lines. The first one was expressed by the chairperson of the convention, McNabb "a moderate socialist". He emphasized political education before political action, and believed that political action should "aim at obtaining legislation of a reform character" (ibid:35). The second view was expressed by C. Stubbs, president of the miners in District 18, who argued that the Federation should fight for the "abolition of the wage system all together", as it was oppressing the workers.

An early effort to affiliate, within the Federation, both workers and farmers (United Farmers of Alberta) had failed in the 1913 convention followed by an accusation of English, the secretary of the Federation, "that there was an element within the farmers' organization

who had other interests to serve" and who opposed farmer-worker unity (Robin, 1968:109).

In 1914 an anarcho-syndicalist faction emerged that wanted to use the organization of the unemployed as an instrument for repossessing wealth and goods "whenever found" (ibid:108). At the same convention the labour "Socialist" group argued for the use of both parliamentary and non-parliamentary political action. That was in order to force the government "to assume responsibility for the carrying on of industry, which had entirely broken down under capitalist management" (ibid:108). This position was in fact expressed in contrast to the Labour Party representatives who were critical only of the failures of the Labour movement in Alberta to represent itself in the Legislature. Under the impact of all these political ideologies and agendas the AFL could only exist, as in fact it did at the end, as a "pure legislative mouth piece" of a lobbying character that stayed away from affiliation to any particular political party (ibid:108).

In the 1917 convention of the AFL the long anti-military stance of Alberta workers was finally expressed in a resolution against the imperialist conscription of the workers in the armed forces of the country (ibid:127). This resolution not only condemned the Borden government's imperialist policies, but at the same time was a break from the stance of the "business unionism" leadership of the Eastern Unions and "Gomperism" who had in fact endorsed the registration, and who had been accused by the Westerners of illustrating "their inability to act in accordance with the interest of the working class" (Caragata, 1979:58).

In the 1919 convention the AFL endorsed a resolution supporting the revolutions in Russia and in Germany, and was giving full power to the executive of the Federation to call for a general strike if the Canadian government, with its allies that had invaded the Soviet Union , was successful in their support of the anti-revolutionary forces in these countries (ibid:71). Eventually, fourteen capitalist countries invaded the Soviet Union during the civil war of 1918-1921. Canada sent 5000 soldiers at British request.

The revolutionary climate in the Canadian west had already been developed and the road to an all-out confrontation with the government and with "Gomperism" had been established. In the 1918 Trade and Labour Congress convention all the resolutions from the

West that were endorsing industrial unionism - instead of craft unionism, - in opposition to the government's imperialist policies against the Soviet Union and "the support for conscientious objectors", had been defeated.

The 1919 convention of the AFL, in response to the previous year's events, endorsed the formation of the Western Labour Conference in which the four provincial Western Labour Federations would be represented (ibid:71). The conference was to review its relation with the Trades and Labour Council (TLC) and at the same time to determine its own political stance and action in the future. In the Conference, all the issues that made the conference necessary in the first place, were unanimously endorsed. However, two different political lines were expressed during the proceedings: an anarcho- syndicalist, and one that favoured political action of a broader nature. The syndicalist line had endorsed the declaration that argued that "the aim of labour as represented by this convention is the abolition of the present system of production for profit and the substituting therefore of production for use" (Robin, 1968:175). They interpreted the term political action in a rather curious way by arguing that,

> "Political action comes through a political system and a political system is a class or a slave system. Politics only exist where there are classes, and any act taken by a class in defence of its interests is political action. ..... any action used to control political power in order to utilize it for the benefit of that class; that is political action and it matters not what method it takes"(Robin, 1968:176).

The line that supported political action of a broader nature was expressed by a resolution put forward by the Alberta Federation of Labour which was asking for the development of "a homogenous political Party as a necessary adjunct to the development of our industrial organization and to the attainment of our national ideals" (ibid:175). The representatives of the AFL warned the delegates that pure syndicalism will not destroy the exploitative system, nor can a strike alone do that (ibid:176). This statement later was shown to be correct.

It was however, the syndicalist line that finally prevailed and which led to the formation of the One Big Union (OBU), as a form of reconstructing the Labour organization of the country. However, the greater opposition to OBU emerged in Alberta where the

movement was even more politicalized. Eventually, came the great Winnipeg Strike of the 1919 which in fact constitutes the historical and political defeat of syndicalism, as a means to change society in this country (ibid:176, 179).

During the 1920's, the AFL gained further prestige within the Canadian Labour movement. In 1926, the president of the AFL was elected president of the of the new National Mine Workers Union of Canada, which had split off from the International Union of Mine Workers of America due to the obstacles the American leadership was forcing upon the Canadian revolutionary development (Caragata, 1979:122). The split was initiated by the secretary and one of the founding members of the Communist Party of Canada that emerged in 1921 after the disintegration of the Socialist Party of Canada in 1919 (ibid:122).

In 1926 when the new All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL) was formed - in reaction to the efforts of the international unions to monopolize the membership of the TLC - the AFL joined the Congress and its president became the vice-president of the ACCL. At the same time the Canadian Labour Party - a party initiated by the TLC - gained considerable political power in the Federal, Provincial and Local government executives. This strength came as a result of the alliance within the Labour Party of communists, socialists, and progressives. An indication of the level of radicalism and militancy of the Labour movement in Alberta during the 1920's was the 1923 AFL convention in which Tim Buck, the secretary of the Communist Party of Canada, was welcomed as a hero and the Red Flag was sung in the closing ceremonies of the Federation's convention (ibid:125). In Alberta, this alliance ended in 1929 when communists were expelled from the Labour Party because of their political ideology (ibid:95).

The 1930's and the 1940's represent a turning point in the history of the Canadian Labour movement as well as Alberta's. The profound changes that took place during this period are also reflected in the changing role and position of the AFL in the labour movement. First was the great depression with all of its consequences, poverty, unemployment, and misery. Then came the second World War. These two events changed the face of capitalist development. The mining industry gave way in importance to the

emergence of the packing industry and later the oil industry in Alberta.

It was also during these times, when the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) was founded in 1932 (ibid:102). In 1949 industrial unionization emerged in the form of the Industrial Federation of Alberta. This was the answer of the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL), founded in 1940, to craft unionism and to the Alberta Federation of Labour. The formation of the Worker's Unity League in the period 1930-37 was fostered by the communists, who had initiated the break of the Mine Worker's Union of Canada (MWUC) from the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL) (ibid:111). Later in 1936 in the AFL convention the MWUC rejoined with the UMWA as a response to the growing racism and fascism in the world and as an expression of Labour solidarity (ibid:118).

The appearance of the Social Credit populist and right-wing political party swept the elections in the province and paternalized the Labour movement in Alberta till the late forties. In 1949 the communists were expelled from the Alberta trade union movement.

The main thrust of strike activity during the 1930's was undertaken by the mine workers who also were the backbone of protest in the camps and the On-to-Ottawa Trek initiated to protest the existence of camps for the unemployed (ibid:108-109). As early as 1932 the AFL started to change its radical and militant character. In the convention of that year and in the publications of the Federation, a differentiation between the government and the financial centers of the country was made as to who bears the responsibility for the depression. The government was portayed as not being able to cope with the demand for assistance and relief for the unemployed and to a large extent it was justified for its inaction.

In 1937, however, the first signs of disenchantment with the Alberta Social Credit government started to emerge. In a statement in the convention of the AFL, the president recognized certain positive measures that the Social Credit government initiated for Labour. At the same time he warned the convention against any absolute reliance on government assistance (ibid:140). But in 1948 the AFL endorsed a resolution, proposed by the secretary of the Federation, amending the Labour Act by putting penalties on illegal strikes (ibid:140). Caragata seems to be correct when in his analysis about the victory of Social Credit during

that period, he argues that

> "The victory of Social Credit provides further evidence that the militancy and radicalism of the province's population was not based on any ideology but was in fact, raw anger waiting to be shaped by the leaders who stepped out of its wings offering a way out of the wilderness" (ibid:121).

This statement can very well describe not only the victory of Social Credit but also the events that took place during the following years - the labour movement's significance and role, at least its leadership, diminished and became subservient to the immense forces of capitalist development that were unleashed before, during, and after world war two, and which swept away even the most significant bastions of labour radicalism and militancy in the country. As Leadbeater describes matters -

> "the aggresive anti-communism hysteria together with the continued decline in the coal mining sector, was used to break much of the militant tradition in the Alberta working class" (1984:59).

The 1950's, 1960's, and mostly the 1970's represent a slow comeback of the labour movement in Canada and in Alberta and an increasing in the importance of the AFL as the coordinating body of the political activation of the working class in the province. In the 1956 convention of the Federation the IFW and the AFL joined forces and a new chapter in the history of the AFL opened up. Their unity resulted from the strike of the Restaurant Employees Union over the work-time issue (Caragata, 1979:141). It was in the same year when the Canadian Labour Congress was formed as a result of the merging of the old TLC (mostly craft unions), and the CCL (mostly industrial unions). The miners and the rail workers had been responsible for the militancy and the radicalism of the labour movement in Alberta. From the late 1950's, the torch of militancy passed to the packing plant employees, the public employees, and the construction workers (ibid:145). Such intensifying problems in this period as the Korean and Vietnam Wars, inflation and unemployment forced the AFL to move towards a "less conservative" ground.

Along with the increase in the membership of the Federation came the endorsement in 1961 of the New Democratic Party, part of the CCF, as the party that represented Labour. The president of the AFL at that time became the provincial leader of the party (ibid:144). In the 1970's another trend developed in the Labour movement of Canada and consequently in

Alberta. This trend opposed foreign ownership and promoted "Canadianization" of the Economy. It was again in Alberta that such a trend found an organizational expression, when the Canadian Section of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union merged with the Canadian Workers Union to become the Energy and Chemical Workers Union with headquartes in Edmonton (Leadbeater, 1984:59).

Despite all these "progressive" steps by the labour movement in Alberta and the AFL, the leadership of the movement never broke away from the ideology of tripartism that wanted Labour, Government, and Business to work together. In the 1970 editorial article in the AFL 1969 Year Book, the executive secretary of the Federation described the framework of tripartism as follows:

> "Labour's cries of "Labour Haters" , chamber of Commerce thinking, bosses, stooges, capitalist press" etc. are as meaningless as those of the headline writers and just as informative. This type of propaganda is having to be replaced by calm reasoned study of the problems and tripartite discussion and cooperation. The days of Labour and Management going their own isolated ways and the public be damned are coming to an end" (McNevin,1969:3).

This prophetic statement was to prove historically incorrect as the growing disatisfaction of Alberta workers with the continuous deprivation of their conditions of life and work during the 1970's was to bring, in the 1980's, considerable changes within the Labour movement and the AFL, as well as in Alberta society as a whole. Nor was Caragata's statement about the qualities of the Labour movement in Alberta to hold true in its entirety, for a long time, when he argued:

> "The labour movement in Alberta is today a far different creature than it was either in the heady days of 1919 or the darkness of the post-second world war period. No longer are the workers of Alberta among the most militant and politically radical in the country, for they have also come a long way from the time when Social Credit was their unoffocial political party" (Caragata, 1979:145).

Comments.

The deepening crisis of Capitalism in the 1980's, and the emergence of the new anti-Labour Legislation and policies by all levels of government, will in fact reproduce the old

ways and forms of radicalism and militancy of Alberta Labour by giving them a different and perhaps more profound ideological character. Leadbeater has shown that the Labour movement in Alberta has gone through three distinct historical stages.

> "The first phase of growing militancy and unity culminates with a crescendo of activity in the late 1910's and early 1920's. The second phase reached a peak in the mid 1940's. The third phase emerged out of the Cold war and is developing at the present time" (Caragata, 1979:59).

It is possible however, as Panitch and Swartz (1985:66) have argued, and as we shall see in the following part of this thesis, that a new stage in the development of the Labour movement in this country has been underway since the early 1980's.

> "There are struggles going on, at the top as well as at the base of the movement , that bespeak of profound and positive changes of a kind, perhaps not seen since the 1930's. It is one of the paradoxes of depressions that they make workers acutely aware of the benefits of solidarity and collective action precisely because their employers are more likely to assert managerial authority in a periods of high unemployment." (ibid.:66)

The main concerns and the major battles of workers throughout these years were centered around the issues of freedom of association (the right to have a union) , the right to strike, the right for free collective bargaining, the decrease in working time, the increase of wages, and for better and safer conditions of work. In the 1960's and 1970's the labour movement had achieved, to a considerable degree, the recognition and the implementation of their right by the government and management. The economic, ideological and social crisis of the 1980's, however, has brought these rights that were the result of long and bitter battles under a tremendous attack from government and management. This attack has challenged not only the existence of the labour movement's accomplishments, but also the very nature of the labour movement itself. It has at the same time brought up an old item, cherished by the labour movement in its historical agenda for the future. As Panitch and Swartz have argued:

> "The working class mobilization and struggle that launched the end of free collective bargaining was related to a much broader political project, the socialist nature of which inspired and sustained it to a significant degree. It is inconceivable that the necessary changes in the labour movement could occur apart from a fundamental revitalization of that broader project" (ibid:68).

Sociologically, the historical movement of Labour in Canada and in Alberta can be understood as a dialectical relation between the short-term and the long-term goals of the

movments and the offensive and defensive means employed in order to accomplish these goals. Two contradictory but dialectically united "tendencies" can be identified. The first tendency is toward a higher level in the quality of life and work of the working class. Its content is characterized by a different system of social relations largely based upon a way of life free from exploitation, oppression, and domination.

A second tendency is toward the consolidation or advancement of standards of living and work, either within the present system of social relations or in a future one. This tendency is largely associated with the concept of the level of the conditions of life and work that can possibly exist or be achieved within the context of a particular system of social relations. It includes issues such as wages and wage increases, housing, free time and leisure, education, health and safety, as well as the entire set of rights and freedoms that a particular system of social relations is able to accept and absorb without a necessary challenging of its own existence. The means of achieving these short and long-term goals can be identified as a tendency toward confrontation and struggle against either friend or enemies, and a tendency toward unity and consensus around particular or general issues, political programs, and ideologies. In their dialectical unity and contradiction these tendencies produce, reproduce and create new forms and contents of cultural consciousness that in a sense constitute the sociohistorical mode of appearance of the Labour movement in any particular period. In the next section we will examine historically some of the major aspects of the cultural consciousness as it has actually emerged and developed from 1979 to 1986, by and through the practices of the participants in AFL activities.

V. CHAPTER V: THE AFL AFTER 1979.

Seems like I've been here before
Can't remember when
I got this funny feeling
We all be together again
No straight lines make up my life
No clear cut beginings
So far no dead ends.
From H. Chapin's Circles.

A. DOCUMENTS REVIEW.

A review of the AFL's official and unofficial documents was done in order to reconstruct the sociohistorical context, content and form of the federation during the 1979 - 1986 period. The review includes the annually ammended constitutions of the AFL, and the convention reports constituted by the reports of the various committees, the policy papers and the proposed resolutions.

The review also included various issues of the AFL's news-letter: "The Activist"; brochures and leaflets distributed to the public for their own information about the AFL's activities; a selective number of media reports and releases; and the document of the AFL;s presentation to the Alberta government which was done in regards to issue of the "Changing the Alberta's Labour Act".

The review demonstrates the developmental stages that the culture of the AFL went through in the 1979 - 1986 period. These stages were, mostly, the product of the contradiction of the AFL with its social environment, as well as of the antitheses (political, ideological, cultural, social) among the various groups within the AFL. An important role had been played by the differences between the executive council, the committees, and the membership of the federation, in their understanding and analysis of their reality. The latter was, largely, reflected, expressed, and manifested in their different praxial responses that they were advocating in regards to the required changes of their social environment. The content analysis of the AFL's conventional proposed resolutions, for the 1979 - 1986 period (See

Appendix A) provide a comprehensive and descriptive summary of the contradictory and fluctuating culture of the federation in its synchronic and diachronic development.

Committee Reports.

The report of the executive council of the Federation's 1979 convention can be considered as a tentative outline of the issues and strategies that the Federation would work on in the following years. The main concern was based on the right of "free collective bargaining" and the implementation by the government of Bill C-28 and Bill C-22 which were perceived by labour as an effort to curtail the ability of the public sector unions to engage freely in the collective bargaining process.

Emphasis was placed on the three-year strike in Parkland Nursing Home in Edmonton. A wish was expressed that a possible change in the ownership of the homes would solve the dispute. An important educational activity had been started in the same year through the Labour Studies Center. The only historical account on the labour movement in Alberta was written by Caragata, a staff member of the Federation. Caragata's book, however, was censored by the leaderhip of the AFL especially these parts which was portraing the historically radical character of the federation and the contribution of the communists.

The Federation also engaged in a developing dialogue with the National Farmers Union, the Councils of Churches, Alberta Students, and the New Democratic Party. This dialogue, in future years, would be translated in the formation of Solidarity Alberta, an important political and organizational step in increasing the social role of the AFL.

It has been noticed in the report, that it was the first time in many years that sixteen labour representatives were candidates for the NDP in the last provincial elections in which the popular vote of the Party increased, but this increase was not reflected in the number of seats in the Legislature.

Finally, and following the mandate from the Labour Conference of the Western Federation a committee was established to fight for legislation and proposals related to the concept of "right-to-work", a USA-conceived plan to allow strike breakers to substitute for

striking workers. At the same time a council of Airport Unions was also established, as a result of the previous year's strike in the airports, in order to coordinate the activities of these unions and the AFL and to improve communication among them.

In the 1980 report of the executive council to the convention of the Federation, the restraint programs of the government and the increasing interest rates , as well as the rates of unemployment, were the most important issues.

With the publication of Caragata's book "Alberta Labour - A Heritage Untold", tribute was paid to workers of the province for their struggles in the development of the Labour movement in Alberta and the creation of the AFL.

For the first time in the history of AFL a full-time staff position of Women's Director was adopted. This policy in the future will have much to do with the implementation of the Affirmative Action Program in the AFL. Since 1980 the government of Alberta promised a review of the entire Labour Act, an event which took place six years later and after bitter struggles by Labour in defence of their rights and freedoms. In the same year the government discontinued its practice of direct consultation with the representatives of the Labour movement. From now on it would be undertaken in a caucus committee that would report back to the government. Despite these measures by the government, the leadership of the Federation had chosen again the road of "cooperation", as they called it, as in the case of workshops in the change of the grievance arbitration system. The major criticism against the arbitration system was focussed on bureaucratic and technical issues, and not on the content and the role of this system as a mode of governmental intervention in the class struggle. The report finishes with a general wish about the implementation of the system as follows: "Anything that can be done ..... will be an improvement".

In 1980 the Federation had signed an agreement with a publishing company for the production of a newspaper "Alberta Labour", in order to improve communication with its affiliates, and at the same time provide more in-depth information to them from a Labour perspective. This "infamous" newspaper was abandoned in the following years surounded with scandals as the publisher used it to advertise non-union goods and services, and at the

same time to limit the amount of much needed information.

As a result of unsuccessful strikes there was in the report of the executive council a resolution that read:

> "The right to organize and the right to collective bargaining does not have much meaning in the province of Alberta."

This resolution conforms with the 1987 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada after the implementation of the first Canadian constitution, that the freedom of association does not necessarily guarantee the rights to collective bargaining or to strike. Besides the early recognition by the Labour movement of this problem, the movement as a whole has not been able during the constitutional debates to force a constitutional recognition of these fundamental rights. Without them, as the current president of the Federation has said, the Labour movement is set back to the 1920's, when the movement first started the fight for these two rights.

In the 1981 convention, the executive council report noted that 1980 was "the worst year in modern history for strikes and lockouts in Alberta". (25th Annual Convention Report (ACL), 1981:12) Most of these strikes and lockouts were perceived to be a result of wage guidelines that were under the "cost of living increases". The interesting aspect was that there was not any reference to the economic crisis and its causes, nor was there an analysis about the role of the Labour movement in it. It seemed that the leadership was, in effect, taken by surprise by the deepening of the social and economic problems and the rapid increase in the militancy of the workers. In fact, they had insisted on the tripartite policy, as they had participated in a number of committees with the government and management and had kept the line of making simple recommendations with a wish for their implementation.

In the case of "Alberta's Working Poor", the executive insisted on the formation of an AFL - government committee to study the problems, when a rapid deterioration in the living and working conditions of a great number of people in Alberta had already taken place.

It was in the same year that Bill 79 (Labour Relations Act), and Bill 80 (Employment's Standards Act), were implemented by the government. These two Bills had a further regressive effect on the rights of workers, for they established a minimum wage of

$3.50 an hour, which was below the poverty level at that time. They further restricted free collective bargaining, and they implemented high technology without consideration of job losses, they restricted picketing, they did not provide insurance coverage for the workers, in case of a refusal to work on dangerous or polluting jobs. They denied the right of public and provincial employees to join and participate in the activities of a political party. Those were some of the issues that, as perceived by the leadership of the AFL, denied the collective rights of workers all together. It was also argued that the "Individual Rights Protection Act", should include in it the collective rights of the workers. As part of the campaign for "Worker's Rights", a petition was organized, primarily within the Labour movement which at the end will find a wider public support.

An important step, however, took place on the Women's Rights question, with the establishment of a special women's committee to deal with the issues of Affirmative Action within the Labour movement.

The accumulated problems from previous years were largely due to the inability of the leadership of the Federation to respond realistically with a program of action that would unite the workers on issues that concern Labour. Most of these problems found their expression in a number of events during 1981 that shattered the unity of the movement in Alberta and challenged the foundations and even the existence of the AFL. The AFL's leadership had failed to develope a budget for the year and economically speaking the Federation was in bankruptcy. As was reported in the 1982's executive council report,the previous year, 1981:

> "It was a year plagued by internal bickering, staff discontent and mistrust, complicated by the resignation of the secretary treasurer, education director, and Health and Safety director. The lowest end was finally reached when a former director saw fit to launch a lawsuit against an AFL vice president."

These events along with the suspension of the Building Trades from the CLC, and from the AFL, brought the Federation to a point, where it had to choose between total distruction or a change in direction; something that took take place in the following years.

In 1982 the theme of the convention was the protection of the Medicare system. In content and form, however, it was the same paradox, as with all the other policies that were proposed by the leadership for that year. The target of this campaign was the doctors of the

province who were to be boycotted if they charged extra on direct billing to their clients. In the president's report on the "International Conference on Quality of Work Life", the convention was deprived of an indepth report of what are the isssues, arguments, and the meaning of the "Quality of Work Life" programs, which included also such issues as, workers' participation in the management of companies. Instead the convention participants received an ambivalent definition of what the concept does not represent, according to the president's advertising:

> "It is probably much easier to define what QWL is not rather than what it is; it is not an alternative for unions and not for the purpose of increasing production."

Nothing was said about the tremendous controversy that has surrounded the concept since 1968 in Europe, or about the implications (economic, political, social, cultural), that have developed in those countries.

In the two major public campaigns of the federation, for workers rights and against high interest rates, in which protests and demonstrations had been organized, the AFL had failed to mobilize its membership. Only "a small but vocal crowd" turned out and participated.

In times where the issues and concerns of Labour at International, National, and Provincial levels about the conditions of work and life, reached a high level of intensification, the AFL leadership appeared, as unable to respond. At the same time it is insisting in the tripartite ideology, that for one more year would prove to be detrimental to the cause of the Labour movement. The only important statement and challenge of government was of a rather cynical nature; it came from the committee on political education, which asked the question:

> "If what Polish workers are doing is so good for Poland, then why is what Canadian workers are doing not good for Canada? The answer 'because Poland is an Eastern block country' is not in our minds an adequate or satisfactory answer." (26th ACR, 1982:30)

The significance of this statement for the Labour movement in Alberta will be illustrated in later years with the formation of Solidarity Alberta, on developing International Worker's Solidarity, and a support for the peace initiatives undertaken by the Soviet Union.

Its full implications however, can not be determined at this point largely due to the still ongoing changes that are taking place within the labour movement and in Canadian society as a whole.

It was in 1983 that a political criticism of the government was delivered by the executive council in its yearly convention report. In this report the "morality of people in government who accept unemployment" as a means to curb inflation, was questioned and some wishful thinking was expressed:

> "Perhaps, now that everything else has been tried and has failed, some of the reforms proposed by Labour will be considered." (27th ACR 1983:29)

During 1982 the Federal liberal government had enacted the 5 and 6 restraint measures on public sector wages that as Panitch and Swartz (1985:9) have argued symbolized the begining of a new era in the political and cultural identity of Labour. These kinds of measures have been implemented by governments in Europe since the 1970's, but for Canada it was a first and according to the authors:

> "this measure heralded the end of an era of free collective bargaining in Canada and this shift towards a more coercive, less consensual system of state - labour relations than at any time since World War II (ibid.)...the Act...completely suppressed the right to bargain and strike for all those public employees covered by the legislation."(ibid:12)

The leadership of the AFL had responded to these events by making a presentation to the provincial government about the concerns of Labour for the Act. What they got as feedback left them relatively satisfied. It was an assurance from the ministers that the Tory government "had no intention of jumping on the Liberal bandwagon", and that "they would not agree with the new Federal proposal of limiting wages". (27th ACR, 1983:32) The AFL leadership's complacency with the response of the government was shortlived for in the end they became disillusioned with the "hypocracy" of the Tories when the latter implemented a 5% restriction on grants, a practical acceptance of the Federal policy. In these events the executive council report contains an interesting statement which is supposed to be a philosophical criticism of the actions of the Federal and Provincial government. It places an apolitical understanding of "reason" in the center of the criteria for action that reminds us to some extent the spirit of the 17th century revolutionary bourgeoisie: "Nobody said logic had

anything to do with politics".

In the 1984 convention, the report of the executive council starts with an all-out attack against government policies perceived as being against the interest and the needs of working people in Canada and in Alberta. During the year the executive council had kept a record of the meetings which were held in order to deal with all the problems and issues that had emerged or were left unfinished by the previous leadership.

In the report the progress of the UAC was discussed. In terms of the Information Action Center (IAC), the report referred to the efforts for protecting the medicare system, and organizing the fight against Bill 41 (wage control), Bill 44 (the withdrawal of the right to strike of all hospital employees, and the implementation of forced arbitration), and Bill 110 that allowed construction companies to create "spin-off" companies with non-unionised workers. The last one was a severe attack against the Building Trades Unions.

In terms of Labour/governemnt relations, the AFL had responded critically to the 1983 speech from the Throne, and suggested a number of reforms that government should include in its policies that were in accordance with policy statements of the AFL.

The next important item was the suggestion to further develop alternate sources of energy in Alberta, that will make the province "the energy capital of the world".

The caucus committee of the government was also criticised as illustrating the way the Tories deal with Labour:

> "Consistent with the provincial government's policy of being accessible only to their corporate friends, we are shuffled off to a caucus committee of government."(28th ACR, 1984:35)

In their public presentation the AFL leadership supported the policy of "fight-back" as crucial to the existence of the Labour movement. It opposed the formation of a new "Canadian Security and Intelligence Service...that ...would be above the law". (ibid.:35)

As in the 1984 report of the executive council, in 1985 the report covers in a systematic way the entire spectrum of the activities in which the leadership of the Federation was engaged. The policy papers of the AFL were also changed in their content and form. Before 1984, the approach to the issues that were of concern to Labour could be described as

"piece-meal" (particular issues were addressed on their own). Since 1984, policy papers have taken the format of "total" approach to issues. Their interelation and interdependence became more and more highlighted.

In 1986, the policy papers were produced under the name "Work and Wages", and "Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value". The last one was addressed to the issue of Affirmative Action and what it means for women workers. The AFL was the first Federation that promoted, and made a slogan of the significance of Affirmative Action programs in the work place.

The 1985 report of the executive council reflected, to a large extent, the consolidation of a different content and form in the political ideology of the AFL. At the same time it expresses the need for stronger concrete political campaigns and activities that would mobilize the trade union movement, and the social movement in the province, in the overall "fight-back" effort of the Federation. The report starts with a strong criticism against the wage restraints and cut-back policies of the government, with regard to essential social services. At the same time it expresses solidarity with the strikes and lay-offs of workers in the meat-packing industries (Canada Packing-Burns-Brooks). This emphasis upon the crisis in the meat-packing industries will prove prophetic for this industry in the next year, and will become one where the Labour movement in Alberta, and in Canada, will enter one of the most important struggles in its history: The 1986 Gainers strike in Edmonton. The president of the AFL described the Gainers situation as follows:

> "It is beyond comprehension that this so called responsible employer would deliberately prey on the unemployed to take the jobs of its employees that are about to exercise their legal right to strike."(29th ACR, 1985:2)

In the same report, support is expressed for the boycott, imposed by the CLC, against Eaton's stores. For the AFL, the 1984 attacks on labour by government, and the suffering of the workers and the people in Alberta, could be overcome only by "unity...coordination...and consistent militant action on an increasing scale".(ibid.:3) In its overall opposition to government policies, the AFL opposed the deregulation of industry, and the tendency toward their privatization that the government had made the mile stone of its policies.

In 1985, the Unemployment Action Center ceased to exist. The provincial government had, according to the AFL:

> "Refused a request for ongoing financing, with the explanation that it was a duplication of services, and since the Federal government financed the original project, it was therefore a Federal govenrment responsibility if it were to be continued."(ibid.:11-12)

In the case of the UAC, the existing conflict between the Federal and the provincial governments again became apparent.

In the same year there was a reconstruction of Solidarity Alberta, that would take the form of a provincial steering committee, within which the Building Trades, the church groups, provincial community organizations, and the AFL would be represented. Solidarity Alberta during the years had successfully developed strong relations with the Building Trades, which had participated in functions and protests. In 1985, however, an important organizational problem emerged. The AFL membership dropped to 95,000 members, the lowest level in the last six years. This was attributed to the inability of the organizing committee to function properly due to the large number of people who were laid off and had lost their union membership.

Four major events took place in the 1984-1985 years. First, in the 1985 convention, the Affirmative Action program was constitutionally implemented. Second, the AFL had financed a tour of British mines, which were in a long and bitter strike, as an expression of a strong international solidarity. This event took place contrary to the will of the CLC, and was a big success -economically- as $150.000 were collected as a contribution to the strike. Politically it showed the international character that the attack on Labour has had in the West.

Third, the AFL organized an international conference, again contrary to the will of the CLC, where trade unionists, scientists, and politicians of the province and the country participated in large numbers. It was the first time, an expression of the unity and solidarity developed within the executive council. And fourth, in 1985 important changes had occurred in the executive council, where trade unionists who were members before 1983, for different reasons had resigned, and new people had taken their place. At the same time, the

computerization of the operations within the offices and the purchase of new printing equipment allowed the Federation to reach more unionists and rank-and-file members, as well as, the larger community. An intensification, however, in the Labour process, within the Federation took place that created problems between a considerable part of the staff union and the officers of the Federation.

In the 1986 convention the theme was "work and wages" in commemoration of the "on-to-Ottawa-trek" that was a protest against the government, 50 years earlier, for the same issues. The main thrust of the campaign was against the so called "free trade" initiative of the Canadian government with the US. This initiative was perceived by the CLC and the AFL as a sell-out of the Nation's sovereignty "served up on a platter to USA"(30th ACR, 1986:B1). Among their activities the AFL opposed the US Strategic Defence Initiative (Star Wars), and emphasized their support for the African National Congress that fought against Apartheid in South Africa. As in 1985, in 1986 officers of the AFL met with trade unionist of the USSR and invitations were exchanged. The AFL had also provided support to the Nicaraguan government, and had protested against the violations of human rights in El Salvador and in Chile. They also joined the boycott of Californian grapes, after a presentation to the convention by Caesar Chavez, a famous trade unionist farm worker in USA, and a great leader of farm workers in California.

In the historically significant crisis of the financial system and especially in the bail-out fiasco of the Canadian Commercial Bank, the AFL demanded security for the "working people's pension fund". At the same time they had urged the Alberta Teachers Association to become more involved in the social, and economic life of the province. The AFL also supported the ten strikes that took place during 1985 with more emphasis to initiatives by the Airport Unions, that included the United Auto Workers (UAW), the International Association of Machinists, and the Canadian Airline Flight Attendants Association, against the Pacific Western Airlines which was demanding concessions on about two hundred items. The significance of this strike was the expression of solidarity of the UAW with the other unions, for when they reached an agreement they did not ratify it until

the other unions had also reached an agreement. During 1985 the AFL also tried to revitalize the Labour District Councils (DLC), and to develop stronger relations with the Building Trades, especially with an organized group of unemployed construction workers, the Dandelions. This latter group had stepped out, according to the AFL, from their unions in order to be able to speak out on issues.

Two more events were of importance in 1985: first, the publication of the "Activist", a news magazine that substituted for "Alberta Labour", and second, the failure of the AFL and the AUPE to organize the taxi drivers of Edmonton in a union.

Policy Papers.

In the policy papers adopted by the 1979 AFL convention, three major issues were analysed. The first one was the concern and the course of action against the "right-to-work" legislation. Second, was the concern over the "Restraint" measures on the economy and the cutbacks in the social programs, adopted by all levels of government, which were perceived as targeted against the conditions of life and work of the workers, their wages, and the right to free collective bargaining and strike as means for accomplishing their goals. Third was a special item in the agenda restraints that had to do with the support of the Medicare System and the loss of quality in the Health Care Services due to the cutbacks.

As an overall observation the leadership of the Federation at the time was more concerned with public presentations, educational campaigns and discussion with other interest groups, rather than with political action as a means of pressuring government agencies to listen to Labour's concerns. Such a stance by the AFL leadership had produced the first criticism by the delegates in the convention of the 1979, expressed in a resolution that passed in the convention. In the same convention the resolutions were in fact initiating the campaign for a "reduction in work time with no loss in pay". This campaign will take six years to implement after major changes in the AFL's leadership take place.

Two important policy papers were adopted in the 1980 convention. One supported Petro Canada as a publicly owned national corporation and opposed any privatization or

foreign control of it. Second was a paper on energy that expressed deep concerns of the Federation about the government's policy on energy, especially the increased foreign ownership of the sector. In the first paper on Petro Canada, a nationalistic opposition against OPEC policies on oil was latent in a statement which argued that:

> "The OPEC nations have, over the past years, used their oil for political purposes and as result, consuming nations have been hit with an energy crisis that has had disastrous effects, not only economically, but shortfalls on oil are causing severe energy problems."

Curiously enough this statement finds USA international monopolies and the AFL in agreement in their criticism against the OPEC. OPEC is portrayed as the cause of the crisis in the oil industry. However, since 1974, Laxer had argued that:

> "For Canada the crisis is a crisis of industrial policy. The launching of a new American energy strategy confronts Canada with a crucial choice, and will point this nation's economy either to the direction of further continental integration or toward independence." (1974:2)

To that, Shaffer added in 1983, that:

> "The determination of the US to regain dominance over oil has had and will continue to have important implications for Canada. It means among other things, an intensification of the historical attempts to place Canada's energy resourses under US control with unlimited access to Canadian energy. The US can significantly strengthen its position vis-a-vis the OPEC countries and the major industrialized powers." (1983:213)

It is for that reason that Shaffer sees that OPEC and Canada share common interests - "to free (their) resources from US control" - something that the AFL leadership in 1980 had failed to see. (ibid.:213)

The policy papers in 1982 were concerned with the "Pension Plan", the "Housing" situation and "Technological Change". The later was mostly a verbal and largely theoretical expression about the impact that the introduction of high technology in the province will have on Labour. The logic of action that is contained in this paper follows that of a tripartite ideology and sees the only place for solving the problems that emerge from the technological change in the collective bargaining process.

In the final analysis, the paper does not consider that the implementation of high technology in the Labour process had already moved ahead and had profoundly altered the institution of collective bargaining. At the same time, it had shaken the foundations of

organized Labour through the policies of massive layoffs that had already been initiated by government and management.

In the 1983 convention, two papers on policy statement,very important to the future of the Labour movement, were adopted. The first came under the symbolic title "The Bloom is Off the Rose in Wild Rose country". It deals with the general state of the economy in Canada and in Alberta and it proposes a two-point action program for the Labour movement in Alberta. According to this paper, in 1982, 10,765 companies and 30.643 individuals went bankrupt in Canada. These rates constitute the highest rate of bankruptcy in the history of the country. Unemployment reached 12.8% and 250,000 people were able to find jobs only on a part-time basis. At the same time 350,000 people "gave up" the search for jobs. In Alberta unemployment rose from a 3.8% to a 10.6% in less than a year, and 114,000 people were looking for jobs compared to 47,000 that were looking in the previous year. At the same time 742 companies and 2,123 individuals declared bankruptcy. The report quotes from a statement of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops who always had argued that a different option of social economic development is needed for Canada, rather than the one employed at the present.

> "This option calls for economic policies which realize that the needs of the poor have priority over the needs of the rich; that the rights of workers are more important than the maximization of the profits."

For Labour this statement meant the development of policies that would be committed to:

a. Full employment;

b. Job security;

c. Decent wages;

d. Fair taxation;

e. Right to public services.

In their two-point action program they were proposing: First, the establishment of the Unemployment Action Centers, that within a year and a half would prove unattainable for financial, organizational, and political reasons, as we shall see in a later section of the chapter. Second, there was proposed, the organization of an Information Action Center that

will be useful and valuable in the future policies of the Federation.

The second policy statement was on the subject matter of Political Education. The document offers a critique for Labour leaders that resist the idea of political education and action:

> "The reality is that the Alberta Labour movement is reaping the results of its failure to place political education and action as its high priority. It can only be surprising that in 1980 there should still be labour leaders that persist in the view that any such activity is unwarranted."

The document advocates a program of political action that will include:

1. Recognition of the necessity for political action as part of every union's program.
2. Meaningful, tangible support from the Labour movement for the political party, candidates, and activities it chose to support.

The program should also be centered around the refutation of a number of myths about the political character and nature of the Labour movement. As an indication of the myths to be refuted we quote:

> "The myth that membership won't tolerate any political action. In fact 'blaming the membership' is nothing more than an apology for leadership failure to move the Labour movement in this area."

It is ironical, however, that the above statement can be perceived as a self-criticism of the leadership of the Federation , when in the report of the committee on Political Education it was argued that:

> "It is with the same degree of disspair that we must report that on Nov. 2nd, a lot of our own members voted for conservatives. Otherwise, how would they have got the majority they did?"(27th ACR, 1983:3)

A number of specific activities were proposed in the document. Two of them however, demostrate what the nature of political education and action should be, according to the Federation. In the first one (number 2) it has been advocated that the members (rank and file) through a dialogue should develop "their own defensible, political positions". In the second one, (number 5), it is advocated that a mobilization of as many members as possible joining the NDP should take place. No other democratic, progressive, or left alternatives are discussed. This is a further indication of the political paternalism that the leadership of the Federation, of which some were members or candidates for the NDP, has constantly exercised

upon the Labour movement. For example, the statement is made, that all the "political aims and programs of the AFL" should be in accordance with those of the organized Labour movement. Further, they should be presented as an extension of the cause of trade unionism.

Whether this statement is a cover up of the NDP's political paternalism or is one that reflects scepticism and conscious reflection upon the nature of this party and an effort to sustain a degree of ideological independence, or neither, is not clear.

The most important event of 1984 however, was the formation of Solidarity Alberta. In the proposal for the development of such an organization, on the basis of the example in British Columbia, the main issue was the "fight-back" campaign of Labour, in coalition with other groups and individuals "who share a sense of moral and social responsibility to the overall community". The fight-back would be targeted against "those who would turn back the hard-fought progress that has been gained by trade unionism since organized Labour formed the AFL in 1912". (28th ACR, 1984: "Solidarity Alberta", p.2)

Solidarity Alberta was formed by the executive counssil of the AFL, "with provision for fair representation of non-affiliated unions". It played an important role in changes in the political climate of Alberta, and in the 1986 Gainers strike. Funding problems, as well as the lack of a political ideology that would unite and organize people around it, forced it to close in 1987. Its program of action included educational programs, marches, demonstrations, and protests through a mobilization of the larger community, protecting the medicare system, and spreading its activities to the entire province. It was however, the successes and the failures of Solidarity Alberta that inspired the AFL, in 1987, to move towards a more ambitious concrete coalition with groups from the larger community. The AFL wished to "recapture" the historical significance of "May Day", in a series of activities that in the end took the form of a Labour festival, hoping that this will become an annual event.

The 1985 policy statement of the Federation was centered around the slogan "reduced work time- no loss in pay". This theme historically is most important in the emergence and development of the Labour movement. On the "reduction of work time" demand, one of the major struggles of the trade unionist movement had eventually been won. It is not therefore,

accidental nor is it secondary that the AFL and the CLC chose the same slogan in 1985 as their guiding principle. This theme had symbolized a level of social awareness and concern that goes beyond the economic demands of Labour. In the introduction of the paper, a reflective relation was made between Orwell's 1984 and the actual conditions of work and life that the workers had experienced during the year 1984:

> "In retrospect, the year just passed could have brought us much closer to Orwell's nightmare. Not just in Alberta, but in the whole western world working people had been stripped of rights and hard won gains at a rate unparalleled in our history."(29th ACR, 1985:"For Jobs and Recovery", p.3)

This led the AFL to develop its main question about the future of the Labour movement and the society as a whole.

> "The survival of the Labour movement will cease to be a question if we decide to move ahead instead of running for shelter. The real question after all, is not our survival, but rather what kind of society our children will be living in. We are at the point where every union battle is now important, every win is a main accomplishment..... We will have a chance to prove how well we have understood these lessons in the campaign being proposed."(ibid.:14)

It is within the above context of understanding social reality that the ambitious campaign "reduced work time-no loss in pay" was launched. A number of coordinating bodies and committees were established and specific plans and programs were laid down. The campaign in itself signifies the tendency against concession and towards militancy. In 1986 it took form especially with the Gainer strike. in 1987 it became more profound and sophisticated with the "change the Alberta Labour laws campaign". The future, however, will show how well was it conceived and planned.

The "work and wages" policy paper of the AFL had reaffirmed its support for

a. An increase in public spending,

b. a reform of the tax system in favour of the economically disadvantaged;

c. the reduction of work time with no loss in pay;

d. the nationalization of Banks, and

e. a stop to the arms race spending and the use of the funds for socially useful production.

An important issue was raised in the paper, with emphasis on political action of a "parliamentary and non-parliamentary" nature. It concluded that,

"The union movement has, in the past given direct support for political action, but today we must redouble our commitments of both money and people for the next Federal and Provincial elections."(30th ACR, 1986:"Work and Wages", p.6)

The policy paper on "equal pay for work of equal value" is an historical document for the Labour movement in Canada. Along with an analysis of the gap in wages of male and female workers, there is an emphasis on the responsibility that the unions have to fight actively the issue of equality in wages of male and female workers. At the same time the paper addresses the exploitation of part-time workers, and the need " to negotiate full benefits for part-time workers".

In the 1986 report there was an inset from the new executive subcommittee on organizing that was formed after a resolution passed the convention of 1985. The committee was able, following a five-point program, to increase the affiliated membership of the AFL from 98,000, in 1985, to 100,700, in 1986. A point was made in the report about an issue that affiliated unions have failed in the past to coordinate with the AFL, in terms of allowing access to their membership lists and to their area of juristriction. This is one of the most serious problems in the trade union movement, where the autonomy of unions is guarded to the degree that in several instances works against the organizational system of the Labour movement.

Resolutions, 1979-1986

Within the same logic of the "Reduction in Work Time with No Loss in Pay" campaign, in the 1979 convention, there were also a number of resolutions criticising the government and management for the increasing rates of unemployment. Further there were resolutions protesting the govenment's policies to allow strike breakers to substitute for striking workers under the government's campaign for the "right-to-work". Important support was also expressed for the implementation of women's rights in society and labour, and the question of protecting the social services under the medicare system were also pursued.

Finally, two important resolutions did not pass. The first one professed the establishment of a "general strike fund" for unions that would find themselves in economic difficulties if a strike was to last for a long time. Second, there was a resolution that the Federation should not donate contributions to organizations collecting them for health research purposes. The argument was that the responsibility for the health of the people of Canada lies in the hands of the government that has failed its duties. These 1979 proposed resolutions can be understood as an outline of the direction that the AFL took in the following years.

The picture, however, reflected from the resolutions in the convention of 1980 was quite different from that of the the leadership reports. The delegates voted in opposition to monopoly capitalist development, for it was based on maximization of profits and not on peoples needs. This resolution, to some extent, echoed the anarchosyndicalist political ideology of 1910 and the early 1920 era.

At the same time the resolutions were opposing the privatization of crown corporations and the medicare system. They were also proposing a "fight back" campaign against "wage consensus".

In 1980 a number of resolutions were passed, expressing international solidarity and support to the people of Guatemala and Chile, and condemning the reactionary role of the USA government in those countries. The delegates also expressed a concern about the low profile that the Labour movement has in Canadian society, and they proposed a public campaign in order to counteract the myths about Labour.

In the political arena, they endorsed the right of the Quebec people to self determination, and they demanded a change in the provincial electoral system based on proportional representation of the political forces of the province.

Finally, an interesting resolution passed, demanding the economic upgrading of the Canadian Armed Forces. In the years to follow however, the union that proposed the resolution became disillusioned with the increasing anti-militarization of the Labour movement in Alberta, and departed from the Federation, in 1986. In 1987, however, after a

long discussion with the president of the AFL, they returned to the Federation, contrary to the adyice of the National headquarters, and proposed a resolution for Peace and Disarmament.

In the resolutions of the 1981 convention there were passed a number of resolutions opposing the "blackmailing" of the Federal Government by the Lockheed company, on a threat by the latter to cut oil production by 15 per cent. In the same resolutions there was a denouncement of the provincial government's seperatist tendencies, as well as of those in Quebec. The delegates also demanded nationalization and democratic public control and ownership of the oil industry. They also opposed the big oil monopolies' plan for maximizing their profits.

Interestingly enough, the AFL executive counsil had passed a resolution that was setting the Health and Safety Act as their primary strategic target. This, in a time when the delegates were demanding the development of a universal medicare system, the withdrawal of Canada from NATO, and a stop to preperations for war. Further, the delegates accused the chemical companies of an inconsiderate pollution of the environment. They also voted for a resolution proposed by the executive of the AFL, to boycott the physicians of the province who were charging extra billing. Finally, they supported the long standing issue of recognition of the veterans who fought fascism in the Civil war in Spain. But at the same time, staying behind their trade union principles, they supported the Solidarity movement in Poland. This convention was historically the one where the program of the NDP found broad support. Many of the above resolutions were in fact taken from the political agenda of the NDP.

In terms of the proposed resolutions in the 1982 convention, the AFL can be seen as being in a crisis. The delegates severely criticised the AFL executive for lifting the boycott on the Calgary Sun, initiated for its anti-labour stance. This resolution, however, after a heated debate, did not pass. At the same time they criticised, through a number of resolutions, unions that had departed into consensus bargaining and had received cuts in their wages and benefits.

They also endorsed a resolution proposed by the CLC for a general strike directed against wage cuts. At the end the "general strike" became a one-day protest with only a few members attending it. They opposed Sunday Shopping proposed by big retail corporations and they demanded that the government use the Heritage fund for job creation programs. Finally, they endorsed the resolution asking for a Nuclear Free Canada. Other resolutions, dealing with all kinds of issues were proposed. In fact they were demanding a fundamentally different kind of government and were in an all out attack against international monopolies.

In the 1983 convention an important change took place in the leadership of the Federation. New officers were elected with a different political ideology, and a tendency against tripartism but towards the implementation of political action was enforced, that would involve a broad mobilization of the Labour movement. This change in the leadership came as a result of a reaction of the delegates to the manipulation tactics of the previous leadership. They had tried to exchange, privately among themselves, the position of the secretary treasurer with that of the president. In fact, the reasons were more profound, as we will see in the following sections. They had to do largel with the inability and with the failure of the previous leadership to respond effectively to the concerns of the Labour movement. With the election of the new leadership, new staff members were hired and an important reconstruction of the infrastructure of the AFL was started. In the following reviews of the documents the extent, and content of these changes will become apparent.

In 1983, the membership once more criticised the AFL executive for failing to act according to their mandate. The delegates now expressed their support for the development of international solidarity of Labour. This trend was also expressed in a series of resolutions that accused the government of the USA of an interventionist policy in Central and South America, and which provided support for the liberation movements of those countries. They also supported the struggle of Blacks against Apartheid in South Africa. As well, they were protesting the Israel invasion of Lebanon. They also supported the proposal made by the USSR for a freeze of nuclear arms, and the demand for nuclear disarmament and against the testing of the USA cruise missile in Alberta. However, two resolutions that were urging the

active participation of the AFL in the peace movement of the province, and another one that was demanding the transformation of the war economy to socially useful production, were both defeated.

In terms of resolutions that referred to Labour, the membership had voted as a priority item the effort to organize the unorganized, and they criticised the existence of regressive legislation for the working class in the province of Alberta. Also in the 1983 convention, the Unemployment Action Center (UAC) was founded.

In 1984, the AFL criticized the government for failing to incorporate the collective rights of Labour within the Canadian Charter of Rights. In terms of women's rights they endorsed resolutions demanding equal opportunities for women, and the right to choose between birth and abortion. Further, they launched the "fight-back" campaign in its initial form, and they condemned the government for its plans to privatize government companies.

In 1985 the Affirmative Action program was funded and implemented with constitutional changes in the AFL. At the same year the "fight back" campaign took a new turn in the implementation of programs of action directed toward the support of the "shorter work time - with no loss in pay" campaign. In the political level an opposition to the ideology of the "newright" was expressed, and a support for the emergence of a government that will not serve only the interests of the few.

In terms of international solidarity, the delegates voted for support of the Nicaraguan revolution and the strike of the British mine workers. At the same time they expressed further support of the proposal of the USSR for a banning of the nuclear missiles and for the non-first-use of nuclear weapons. Finally, they renewed their endorsement of the May Day celebrations.

In 1986, the convention of the Federation endorsed the return of one major union from the Building Trades to the Federation. At the same time they voted for the allocation of a fund for small unions, so they will be able to send delegates to the convention. Opposition was expressed against the policy of the Board of Industrial Relations, to make a statement about its decision claiming that Labour representatives unanimously agreed with all

the decisions reached in it -even though such Board claims were false. Further, they protested against the provision of the Labour Act, that was allowing the companies after 25 hours of strike to lock out the workers, who were no longer considered employees of the company.

Similarly, they supported a policy of the "minimum wage" and they demanded the nationalization of major corporations and banks, and democratic control of the Alberta Heritage Fund.

Comments.

Earlier we introduced in our analysis of the history of the AFL, the two dialectically united and contradictory historical tendencies of the Labour movement. The first was the tendency toward a different quality of life and work, free from exploitation, oppression, and domination; and the second was the tendency toward consolidation and advancement of the standards of life and work within a particular system. We also argued that they were basically, two forms of mobilization, also dialectically united and contradictory, one based on concessions and the other based on struggle.

Both forms of mobilization had been employed in the accomplishment of concrete goals that were part of either of the main historical tendencies of the Labour movement. The question of which form should be used for which tendency, can be addressed only in relation to the actual events that have taken place in the Labour movement in the AFL and in the larger society.

The detailed analysis of the AFL documents, in conjunction with the brief review of the history of the AFL, demonstrate the fact that there was not any consistent application of any particular form of mobilization. The results of either kind of mobilization were beneficial and positive to the historical development of the Labour movement and of the AFL.

These arguments provide support for the thesis that the historical development of the AFL and the cultural formation of the Fdederation is a non-linear one. This means that arguments that try to support a "cause and effect" relation between the processes and the

phenomena that have emerged in the historical development of the AFL can have only a very limited explanatory ability. For example, let us consider the question: was the emergence of the Social Credit in Alberta a result of a political ideology of Labour of the time, or was it due to the split between the socialists and the communists? Or to still other factors? It is not possible to argue that the overall culture of the AFL can be described by one kind of abstraction- for example, radical/militant.

These concerns led the way towards a dialectical understanding of the development of the AFL and of the cultural formation of the Federation. Such an understanding allows the development of a sociological perception of the AFL culture that is described by continuities and discontinuities in the historical process, by set-backs and advancements, and by a constant fluctuation and periodization of cultural processes and phenomena. The latter, will be further investigated in the succeeding sections of the chapter.

It can, hoever, also be illustrated by the example of the proposal of the AFL, in the first conference of the Western Federations, to form a political party that will struggle for a qualitatively different system. The cultural pathways that seek qualitative changes of a reform character for the social system do not necessarily base themselves on struggle, but rather on a broader concession by labour. These pathways under certain different circumstances form another kind of cultural pattern when a "critical" stance is assumed towards labour and society.

The Critique and Negation of the social system however, even when dialectically united, are at the same time contradictory and antagonistic to each other. For example the cultural node of Critique can be illustrated by the development of the tripartism in the 1960's and 1970's, as a dominant ideology in the Labour movement. In the 1980's, and at least within the AFL, this ideology, to a large extent, has been negated by the "fight back" campaign.

Parallel processes prevail also within the tendency towards a consolidation or advancement of the standards of living and work of the working class. Extra billing by the physicians in the province was perceived as a threat to existing standards of living of the

workers in Alberta. This measure provoked a "reaction" of organized Labour against the physicians. The AFL felt compelled to struggle against them, a movement that brought them in social "conflict" and forced them towards launching a boycott against those doctors that had implemented such a policy.

On the other hand, the Building Trades left the Federation accusing it of destroying the existing social "order", and the traditional role of organized labour that centered solely around economic demands. With this move the Building Trades were expressing agreement with the policies of the government and management and at the same time, legitimizing these policies within the labour movement.

In respect to the cultural nodes - Negation, Critique, Legitimation, Reaction - it can be argued that their dialectical unity and contradiction exists not only within the general tendency in which they emerge, but also in their mutual interrelations. This relation effects, to a great extent, how each node will appear in the overall culture of the AFL, and in the final analysis, which one will become dominant, in which period. Thus, the praxial and symbolic elements of militancy and radicalism of the 1930's can not be the same in content and form with those of the militancy and radicalism of the 1980's.

VI. CHAPTER VI: ORGANIZATION OF THE AFL.

"Politics cannot be seperated mechanically from organization."
Lenin, cited in Lukacs 1983:295

This review includes first a schematic representation of the organizational features of the AFL and its affiliation to the Canadian Labour Congress; the structure of the AFL; and the yearly representation of the delegates in its conventions from 1979 to 1986.

Affiliations.

The AFL is affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress, along with nine other provincial Federations of Labour. The CLC is also composed, in addition to the Provincial Federation, of National and International Unions, Directly Charted Unions, and Local Labour Councils. Within the National and International Unions, Local Unions are affiliated and represented in their yearly conventions. Local and Directly Chartered Unions have the right to affiliate with Local Labour Councils and Provincial Federations, as long as they are affiliated with the CLC.

The term International Unions refers to Unions that have a joint Canadian and American membership. The economic crisis in the 1970's and the 1980's however, has brought a tendency towards Nationalism and Canadianization of the Labour movement, that has resulted in a steady decrease in the members of the affiliated International Unions in the CLC, and an increase in the National ones. (Laxer, 1976:111-115)

The CLC is only a relatively autonomous body, for it is affiliated to the American AFL/CIO. (White, 1980:82) Of the four provincial centers in Quebec, only the Quebec Federation of Labour is affiliated to the CLC (Ibid.:84). International affiliation to the CLC include the International Labour Organization (ILO), recognized by the United Nations. The ILO in the early 1980's took an active role in the review of the Labour Acts in a number of provinces including Alberta, which was found to be one of the most backward in labour legislation, on the National and International level (Panitch, 1985:9). Another international

affiliation to the CLC is the International Council for Free Trade Unions, which has affiliations only from the capitalist countries, and is dominated by the American AFL/CIO.

The convention of the CLC takes place every two years in order to elect the executive council, to develop Congress policy, and make amendments and changes to the constitution. Every delegate or affiliated local union and/or organization has the right to submit resolutions to be voted on by the membership. (White, 1980:83) There are two full-time positions in the executive of the Congress and nine departments that deal with a variety of issues. The CLC is the mouth-piece of the Labour movement to the public and to the Federal Government. (ibid.:84) Schematically, the structure of the CLC can be described as illustrated in Appendix D, Fig.1.

The organizational structure of the AFL to a large extent, resembles that of the CLC, and in fact, it is also an umbrella organization for Labour at the Alberta provincial level. However, there are organizational differences that have an overall effect upon the Federation.

The purposes of the Federation are outlined in article II of the constitution of the AFL; these confirm its largely lobbying character. Along with statements about the support of the Federation for the ideas of Peace, and freedom of democratic rights, liberties and collective interests of its affiliates, and the members of the society at large, in purposes #9 and #10 the boundaries of the political character of the Federation are drawn. Purpose #9 of article II, in the constitution of the AFL reads as follows:

> "To protect the Labour movement from all corrupt influences and from undermining efforts of totalitarian agencies (9) which are opposed to the basic principles of our democracy and freedom of democratic unionism".

In purpose #10 we read: "to preserve the independence of the Labour movement from political control....."

In conjunction with article II, which outlines the purposes of the Federation, article VI, section 2 designates the president of the Federation as the only one who actually has the power to interpret the constitution.

"Subject to an appeal to the Canadian Labour Congress, the

> president shall have the authority to interpret this constitution and his interpretation shall be conclusive and in full force and effect unless reversed or changed by the executive council or a convention or the Canadian Labour Congress".

It is true that there are democratic provisions in the above article that to some extent limit the subjective interpretation of the constitution by the president of the Federation especially on issues that concern purpose #9 and #10. The first question that can be asked is, in what political-ideological direction is the constitution exercised? The answer as far as it concerns the executive council and the CLC, would have to be viewed in relation to the general political-ideological climate that prevails in a perticular period in the Labour movement, and particularly in the Labour movement in Alberta. The second question has to do with the effectiveness of these provisions to protect the collective and individual rights of the members and the affiliates in the Federation, especially those that regard the freedom of conscience.

According to the constitution, there is a complicated procedure for the submission of any type of resolution, petition, or appeal outlined in article IV section 12. This requires a general consent of the Local Union or other affiliated organization, upon the nature of the resolution, petition, or appeal. There is a time control in their submission. A three-quarters consent from the delegates of the convention is necessary if the resolution is beyond the time limits, in order to be discussed; and a proposal by the respective convention committee for concurrence or non-concurrence. In the final analysis, every resolution, petition, appeal and amendment to the constitution has to be approved by the CLC.

Unless a radical change in the political climate of the entire Labour movement and of Albertan and Canadian society emerges, the power of interpretation of the constitution of the Federation lies with the centralized power of the higher bodies of the CLC executive council, and particularly upon the president of the Federation. In its turn, however, the president's interpretation will be based not so much on the support that his or her political ideology finds

within the AFL, but rather on the general and basically unanimous consent that exists within the AFL around the various issues which concern the Federation.

The centralized executive power of the president of the Federation is further enhanced by constitutional provisions that give the president the authority to delegate officers in case of absence, and to chair all the meetings of the Federation. In turn this centralization of power in the hands of the president of the AFL makes him/her a political hostage to the policies and the prevailing ideologies in the CLC.

The historical experience of the 1940's and 1950's has shown that in the final analysis it is largely the political ideology of the Left that has been interpreted as a "totalitarian agency". Unions that have abscribed to it have sometimes in the past been expelled from the trade union movement. In fact such provision still exists in the constitution of the Federation, in article II, section 3, which reads:

> "Any organization controlled or dominated by or whose policies and activities are directed towards the achievement of the program of purposes of any totalitarian movement shall not be permitted as affiliates of this Federation."

On the other hand, the Labour movement, especially after the cold war era, but even before and during World War II, has fought against fascism, imperialism and sexism, as these "movements" represent "totalitarian ideologies". It also continiously struggles for an on-going democratization of the basic institutions and policies of the Canadian state and governments.

Constitutionally and historically, the AFL's present form of organization can today be identified as being located mainly in the Center-Left of the ideological map of Canada.

This process of consistent democratization of the economic and political life in Canada and in Alberta, if sustained, would have to find its expression in the clear and stated interpretation of the AFL's constitution, especially in regards to the two previously discussed terms: "our democracy" and "totalitarian

agencies".

The tension that exists however, between the NDP and the Labour movement, or at least an important part of it, has been expressed in a series of proposed resolutions in the 1980 convention, asking for independence of the AFL and of the CLC from the NDP, which at the end was passed.

In the 1983 AFL convention, however, a number of resolutions passed encouraging more political participation of the Labour movement in the formation of the policies of the party. But at the same time they were underlining the necessity for more independence from the party. Further, in the last convention of the NDP in Alberta the delegates of the AFL in the convention, in their report back to the executive council of the AFL, expressed their discentchantment with the right wing shift that occurred in this party under the prospect of future electoral gains.

It is clear, then, that this tension has not yet found a constitutional expression - for example in the election system of the officers of the AFL - such as a proportional representation system of slates with their own particular ideology and action programs, would have allowed. This trend is not surprising, however, if the lack of another mass supported left political alternative were taken under consideration, along with the recent attack on the Labour movement as a whole from government and management. The latter has in fact, forced the Labour movement into a unity in defense of the traditional trade union principles of the movement, and into alliances with other social movements that do not share a common political agenda with labour. (Panitch and Swartz, 1985:65)

Yet the movement as a whole has accumulated gains in the last seven years, as shown by the formation of Solidarity, the defeat of right wing labour leaders, the election of progressive and left officers in the labour bodies and of candidates in provincial and local councils that have been supported by Labour and other progressive forces. A considerable degree of momentum within Labour

and society has been initiated in recent years. The direction, content and form of this momentum is now to be outlined (ibid.:68)

In the 1985 convention an important restructuring of the executive took place. The AFL has complied, after a hard debate, with the principles of "affirmative action" a long-time demand of the women's movement in this country. By a series of amendments to the articles of the constitution that refer to the officers of the Federation, it is now guaranteed that at least one member of the executive committee should be a woman. Also, at least three of the rest of the nine members of the executive council should be women. Ballots in the election of the officers of the Federation, in order to be valid should include the minimum number of women indicated in the constitution. The constitution also guarantees that these minimum numbers for women representatives should not be limited to the total number of women officers in the executive council of the Federation. These provisions in the constitution will become "null and void" by the 1988 convention of the Federation.

It seems important to mention that in regards to the representation of the officers in the convention, the years of the convention, and the place of the convention, considerable attempts have been made to limit the times that the Federation meets per year in the convention and to decentralize the places where the Federation meets.

Structure.

As part of the overall organizational structure of the AFL, a number of "standing" committees exist that deal with issues such as political education, organization, legislation, education, and environment. The executive council has the right to create other ad hoc committees as it "deems necessary". In 1984, in order to cut down the bureaucracy in the Federation, a major reconstruction of both the standing and the ad hoc committees took place, as an initiative of the executive council of the Federation. A number of ovelapping

committees were in fact incorporated within each other, on the basis of a more politicized content. Here again organizational control lies in the executive council which has the constitutional authority to assign the president and the secretary of these committees as well as their membership.

Finally, the executive council has the right to appoint a staff that will carry on specific duties designated to it by the council. A significant problem, however, has developed with the emergence of a union of the staff members of the Federation, that more than once has created a considerable degree of tension between the Federation as an employer, and the union of its staff members. As one officer of the Federation has pointed out, staff unionism was the result of business unionism in the first place that had for a long time used its staff for anti-worker policies. In its early emergence it represented a significant negation of the role and the activities of business unionism that were largely against the interests of the workers. The same officer brought as an example the case of the 1986 strike of the staff union in the AUPE, that he perceived as a challenge to the authoritarian and conservative direction that the leadership of this particular union had taken. At the end, it resulted in the dismissal of the most militant elements within the staff union of the AUPE, that according to the same source, allowed for an even more conservative turn in the direction of Alberta's largest union.

In the case of the Federation however, there is a qualitatively different set of problems. Since 1983 there is a significant upgrading in the role of the AFL in the Alberta Labour movement and in relation to that a significant increase in the load of work that the AFL has to accomplish. This change in the work load and consequently in the intensification of the work process, has produced a considerable degree of tension between the union of the staff of the AFL, and the officers of the AFL.

The union of the staff that ascribes to a trade union political ideology has not been able to understand and or to relate to the organizational changes that have occurred in the AFL. In this case the negation of the Federation by the staff union moves in a different direction compared with the case of the AUPE. That is why in many cases a considerable

debate in the office work of the AFL has occcured along with underutilization of AFL office equipment and machinery. As a consequence the AFL has to overemploy a number of staff members that agree with the Federation on a politico-ideological rather than trade union basis.

Schematically, the organizational structure of the AFL can be represented as illustrated in Appendix D, Fig. 2.

In terms of the finances of the Federation, funding for its activities and programs is provided by the affiliates to the Federation on the basis of per capita contributions. Special financial committees are also based on the per capita contribution. Funds from governmental and other agencies are under constant scrutiny, and their existence depends largely upon the political inclinations of the leadership.

Representation.

Affiliates are represented in the convention of the AFL on the basis of a system of proportional representation. A minimum number of delegates for each union is guaranteed; an additional number of delegates are calculated on the basis of a fixed additional number of members of each union. Further, a fixed number of delegates from the Central and Provincial council are also included. Thus in 1980, the number of the delegates that would represent their respective unions in the convention, was calculated on the basis of one delegate for every 100 or less members and one additional delegate for every 200 members or major fraction thereof.

Since 1983, however, and probably as a result of the de-affiliation of the International Unions of Building Trades, delegates are calculated on the basis of one delegate for every 100 or less members, and one additional delegate for every 100 members of each union. Central and Provincial council are represented by two delegates for each one.

Table 1, in Appendix D, illustrates the changes that have occured between the 1979 to 1986 in the representation of the affiliates in the AFL conventions.

The most important change was the one that occured in 1982, when about 18,000 (26th ACR, 1982:16) Building Trade's members were suspended from the AFL for failing to pay their yearly dues. This act was a follow up of the suspension of the Building Trades from the CLC for the same reason.

Leadbeater has argued for this split in the Labour movement, that in fact, it is a result of the major socio-economic changes which have taken place in Canada.

> "Recently, in the face of deepening economic crisis and increasing militancy and national consciousness in the Canadian labour movement, certain right-wing leaders and 'roadmen' in twelve US-run international building trades union have tried to split the Canadian Labour Congress and hence, the Provincial Federations of Labour and Local Labour Councils, by setting up another labour centre, in the so-called Canadian Federation of Labour." (1984:59)

This trend, however, goes back to the early 1970's, when in 1974 the Building Trades withheld their dues from the CLC "as a means of sabotaging stricter guidelines for Canadian autonomy." (ibid:59)

A proposal made by the CLC, that at the same time reflected the mood of a number of Building Trades Union since 1975, to form a Canadian Building Trades Council, was rejected out of fear of reprisal from the International Union. (Laxer, 1976:153) Since 1982 the Council of the Public Sector Union had in effect ceased to exist, probably because of the suspension of the Building Trades from the CLC and the AFL. This Council had acted within the AFL until 1981 as a coordinating body of the activities of the Public Sector Unions on a relatively militant nationalistic course. As a result of the council's role and position within the AFL's organizational structure, (it has been described by an officer of the AFL as a second AFL), the Building Trades Unions felt that their role and presence as well as representation within the AFL had a secondary quality. Thus, in the 1980 convention of the AFL on the last day and during the elections of the officers of the Federation, the Building Trades left the room as an act of protest. This move initiated a series of debates within the AFL executive and conferences of the membership about the character of the representation system of affiliates in the AFL's convention and executive council.

The proposed changes in the representation system, made by the special committee, was in a sense a total acceptance of the Building Trades recomendation of having ballots that

represent a number of votes which were going to be cashed regardless whether all the delegates of a particular union were present at the convention or not.

This proposal was described by an officer of the AFL as a serious infringment of democratic rights of the delegates. It was not finally implemented, due to the events that emerged in 1981 and 1982 and resulted in the suspension of the Building Trades from the AFL and the CLC.

In the 1986 convention however, the International Building Trades Union, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Journeymen of America, representing about 5,000 members in Alberta, reapplied and were granted affiliation with the AFL. To honor the event the convention voted for a resolution that one additional representative of the union will sit in the meetings of the AFL executive with voice , but without vote, until the 1988 convention.

Another significant event in the 1986 convention, in regards to the representation of unions in the convention, was an accepted resolution aimed at providing financial subsidy for the delegates of small unions, who are interested in participating in the proceedings. This resolution passed. The same logic underlies the expressed concern for revitalization of the District Labour Councils, which will have to take a more active role in organizing and representing the local unions within their constituency. As an overall observation, the representation system of the affiliates in the AFL has moved despite its temporal problems towards larger representation. This trend is indicative especially for the 1982 to 1986 period in such events as the change in proportional representation, the implementation of the Affirmative Action Policies, and the subsidy of the small unions.

In the 1986 report of the Executive subcommittee on organizing a healthy trend toward organization and working class representation in the AFL was shown. The report indicated that out of the 298,000 members of unions in Alberta, 136,127 union members affiliated with the CLC and 107.000 of them with the AFL. (30th ACR, 1986:B48)

Comments

However, historical changes in the system of representation in the AFL in conjunction with changes in organizational structure represent a more profound trend than the contradiction between the newly emerged nationalism and internationalism within the Labour movement. This trend is related to the future mode of political expression within the organizational structure of the Federation, of the ideologies and cultures which will require a different context in order to become visible and institutionalized.

This shows the need for the initiation of a formal, broad, and democratic dialogue, through and about action, among the various forces that exist within the Labour movement. Such a dialogue which, as we will see in the following sections of the chapter, has already been started. It is centered around real issues and programs of action and manifests a deep concern of labour about its direction and the direction that the development of the society as a whole should follow.

With this the present discussion has reached another set of questions: how the different modes of culture are produced through and by the praxis of the AFL's participants; and what kind of culture did these practices produced in the end? These questions will be examined in the following chapter.

VII. CHAPTER VII: THE AFL IN THE MAKING.

We will never lay down Arms (till) the House of Commons passes an act to put down all Machinery hurtfull to commonality, and repeal that to hang Frame Breakers! But We. We petition no more -that won't do- fighting must.
Ned Ludd, cited in Thompson, 1982:579

A. PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AFL, 1983-1987.

The main questions that this section will try to address are:

1. Under what circumstances does the AFL and the participants in the AFL initiate different kinds of practices and activities?

2. What does the content and the form of these activities express about the political and ideological and structural organizational consciousness of the AFL and its participants?

3. Which of these practices have a high degree of consolidation in the cultural consciousness of the AFL?

4. What "kind" of culture do the specific activities of the AFL produce?

Collected data were categorized on the basis of five general categories:

1. The history of the activity.

2. Its structural organization.

3. The political ideologies that emerged in it.

4. The types of practices and their qualities that were taking place.

5. The overall social profile of the participants.

There were three major activities sponsored by the AFL, and in which the researcher had participated in different capacities. These were

1. The Unemployment Action Centre, 1984.

2. The 1985 Convention.

3. The Gainers' Strike, 1986. There were four sets of contradictions that were constantly examined: (a) The quantity/quality relationship; (b) The advancements/set back according to the defined objectives of each activity; (c) The relationship between spontaneity and

consciousness;(d) The element of continuity/discontinuity in the practices.

The Edmonton Unemployment Action Centre (U.A.C.) (1984)

The present writter's participant observation in the Edmonton U.A.C. was in fact an early introduction to the activities of the AFL. In a total of six visits that were made to the centre in December 1983 and January 1984, the participation was rather minimal and mostly concerned with the office work. The inside "informer" was a staff member who had introduced me as a volunteer student interested in the unemployment crisis.The rest of the staff members were informed about my identity as a researcher and about the AFL's approval on the project. Notes were recorded and kept outside of the premises of the Edmonton Unemployment Action Centre.

In the policy paper entitled "The Bloom is Off the Rose in Wild Rose Country," of the 1982 AFL convention, an action program that could respond to the unemployment crisis in the province was adopted. This program included the creation of Unemployment Action Centres throughout the province "to offer aid, assistance and organization to the unemployed."

The AFL had submitted to the federal government under the New Employment and Expansion Development program(NEED) a proposal requiring economic assistance for the centres. On June 30, 1983, a fund of $466,000 for a twelve-month period was approved. The AFL opened up thirteen centres including one in Edmonton. There was also a plan to open three additional centres: one in Edmonton, one in Calgary and one in Edson. The Federation hired 27 staff personnel with $200 per week from the NEED program and an additional $125 from the AFL budget. They also hired a provincial coordinator and an assistant coordinator (the latter largely responsible for the Edmonton Centre) funded entirely from the AFL's budget. Plans were also made to hire a secretary, and a research and publications officer as well as an organizer for Centres in Southern Alberta, outside Calgary. The main idea for the Centres was the development of an organization for the unemployed that would be supported by the affiliated unions, based on volunteers who would be able to carry on the work after the

funding was depleted on June 4, 1984. Further, this organization was supposed to create ties with other community and social groups such as women, churches, ethnic, peace, youth, leading to the formation of a people's coalition concerned not only with the problem of unemployment but with an entire range of problems created under the impact of the current economic crisis.

The U.A.C. continued their operations for several months even after the funding of the centres had been exhausted. The provincial government refused continuation of the funding, claiming that the province already had these kinds of services and after all it was the responsibility of the federal government, which had initially provided the funds to support the operation. A steering committee had been established by the AFL for the U.A.C. that included representatives from the executive council, the district labour councils and the provincial assistant coordinator. Also, a committee under the jurisdiction of the district labour councils had been established with the responsibility for the operation of the local U.A.C. Centres. Committees, including the staff and volunteers had also been established within the U.A.C. Their success in functioning varied from one centre to the other.

Staff people in the centres were supposed to undertake a specific area of concern (churches, unions, women) and try to establish contacts and even committees that would pursue specific projects related to the unemployed. Through their time of operation the U.A.C.s took part jointly in two main campaigns along with the day-to-day services that were provided to the unemployed and the numerous projects that its centre had initiated. First, there was a massive petition to the provincial government in order to push it toward the development of policies that would lead to "full employment and to put Alberta back to work." It resulted in the collection of 10,000 signatures from across the province, and delivered to the premier's office.

The second project was to establish a "tent city" outside the legislature in order to draw political attention to the importance, of the social and working life of the province, and of the problem of unemployment. This was scheduled for the 19, 20, and 21 of October, 1984 weekend, but bad weather conditions intervened. Only fifteen people participated during

the demonstration. During the operations of the U.A.C. and out of the work and the community contacts established through the centres in 1984, the AFL was able to initiate the development of Solidarity Alberta. This organization would further undertake the task of creating a people's coalition. From the experience of the centres, the Dandelions emerged as an organization for unemployed construction workers that would give new ideas as to how the unemployed might develop their organization.

The History of the Edmonton U. A. C.

The idea for the U.A.C. was initially conceived in Edmonton. In 1982, a committee for the unemployed had been established by volunteers that met regularly in the basement of a city church. Sixty to seventy unemployed people and concerned citizens attended the meetings, and the first discussions of what should be done about the unemployment crisis took place.

The lack of funding, and the existing rivalries among the participants and within the coordinating committee eventually led to its disintegration. The historical importance of this committee, however, was that in one of its largest meetings (150 people attended) the majority of the people were workers. They were also able to establish the fact that an organization for the unemployed was necessary in Edmonton that would take advantage of the experience of the unemployment centres in British Columbia. The goal for such organization was to lobby and to push the government for the establishment of economic policies that lead to full employment. Further, a statement was released in the media making clear to the public the sentiments of the unemployment problem, the need for the organization, and a critique of the government for failing to create policies fostering full employment.

The Albertan shift given to the ideas for organizing the unemployed was simple. The project would expand its function from the provisions of social services to the workers (as was done in British Columbia) to the development of action programs of a political character. In Edmonton, the U.A.C. was located downtown near the CN railway tower. This location would eventually create great problems in

the operation of the centre. In the end it became almost completely occupied by non-organized and lumpen elements. These elements would eventually scare away the workers, unionists, youth, and women. The setting up of the centre was also a major problem. Poor ventilation, poor hygienic conditions and lack of essential office equipment had an adverse impact upon the standards and quality of work in the centre as well as on the levels of participation in its acitivities.

The Structure and Organization of the Centre

The Edmonton District Labour Council took the organizational and publicity of the centre and assigned one member of its executive as the liaison person with the centre. The provincial assistant coordinator along with a member of the Edmonton District Labour Council, created a committee that hired, after public advertisement, five staff people. Thus, in the Edmonton UAC there were four groups of participants, the coordinators with the members of the DLC, the staff, the community volunteers and the unemployed. Despite the numerous discussions that took place among these groups in the centre which extended as far as the steering committee of the U.A.C. and even to the AFL executive council, no formal ways of proceeding or of decision-making were ever established. Further, despite the formal control of the AFL and the DLC over the centres, the centres were in fact run by the coordinaror and his assistant. In essence, the staff, the volunteers and the unemployed had very little input in the decision-making process, and little influence upon the direction of where the centre should go.

Thus, three competing tendencies had developed within the centres with regards to its organizational structure. The first one was advocating a control of the centres from above with only some input from the staff. The second was advocating for a control of the entire operation by the unemployed, the volunteers, with some input from the staff unions, the coordinator and his assistant. And the third one advocated that the coordinators should concentrate in providing the day-to-day social services and act as the contact people with other groups where the unemployed and the activists

would undertake the task of creating an organization for the unemployed of a political character.

This third line in the end was left to prevail due to the inability of the other two to dominate the structure and the organization of the centre. This resulted in a tremendous conflict between the unemployed and the activists with the coordinators and the staff. Under the prevailing character of the centre, the unemployed and the activists were almost abandoned by the coordinators and the staff and were allowed to do whatever they thought was correct. In the end there was a premature push from the activists to develop the organization for the unemployed.

The eventual failure of this organization was largely due to the fact that they had not developed any support from the unions, nor had any workers a majority in its ranks. Many of the participants in it were marginals, suffering from chronic unemployment and some of them had a criminal record. In terms of the activities, the union contacts were largely unsuccessful, while the contacts with women's groups were able to initiate a daycare program for the unemployed. Only the church contacts proved somehow successful, but only on a charity level. Overall the centre failed to develop any concrete plan of action or even a clear definition of its existence and its main goals and priorities. This along with the political and personal antagonisms among the persons of the centre as we shall see later, resulted in the irony of laying off one of the staff, an act that provoked legal action on his behalf against the AFL for unlawful dismissal.

Political Ideologies.

In the 1983 Convention of the AFL, for the first time in the history of the federation an openly professing communist was elected as president of the federation, and the position of the secretary-treasurer was occupied by the past president of the AFL and a member of the NDP. One of the vice-presidents of the federation had the overall responsibility for the U.A.C. and was at the same time a member of the NDP. The criteria that had been established for the hiring of the coordinators and the staff

were mainly based, first, on the political inclinations of the applicants, and second on their trade union experiences and their overall stand towards the labour movement. Thus, as provincial coordinator for the U.A.C. a member of the NDP, (a school teacher by profession) who had in the past worked for the Alberta Union of Public Employees (AUPE), was hired. The assistant coordinator was a member of the CPC (Communist Party of Canada) a social worker by profession and active for a long time in the labour movement.

There were basically 5-7 staff positions throughout the year of its operation, with different people occupying these positions. Their political inclinations would be characterized as leftist (ranging from social-democrats, socialists, communists, and even anarchists). Their professions ranged from construction workers to social workers and priests. The unemployed and the activists that had volunteered for the Centre in terms of their political labels had an even wider representation, including liberals, survivalists, and socially concerned individuals. Interestingly enough, no particular political line (except a broad and undefined left tendency) had been pushed overtly, nor had any public political ideology of any particular party ever been discussed.

These kinds of discussions were done mostly on a one-to-one basis by all the political forces represented in the centre and on the basis of an individual rather than collective initiative. Further, political discussions about party lines were mostly targeting individuals who had already shown a tendency toward a particular party. Thus, it seems that political life in the Centre was mostly concerned with the issue of unemployment. Political conflict on the party level was either consciously avoided or not initiated, perhaps due to naivety or inexperience. This should not be surprising in view of the fact that social-democrats and communists had at least cooperated in the leadership of the AFL. The rule for this relationship seemed to be centered around the theme that "the times are very tough for labour and at any cost we should stick together and avoid any sort of provocation to each other," as an activist member of

the NDP had said.

This informal unity between the NDP and the communists appeared to be reflected in the U.A.C. of Edmonton. In the one-to-one discussions, however, the story changes altogether. The NDP seems to have followed a line based on the argument that the unemployment crisis will be resolved by proper legislation initiated by this party if it ever comes to power. This line is an electorate line aimed at immediate and short-term goals. The unemployed in the centers should work towards this goal, said the NDP. On the other hand, the communists were arguing that the unemployment crisis is part of the overall crisis of the capitalist system and can only be resolved if that system changes altogether and only if the people in this province and country mobilize for it. This policy can be described as a long-term one. It was aimed basically at developing a coalition of the party with broader masses of people. These connections for a long time had severely declined during the 40s and 50s.

There were also other expressed political beliefs: an anarchist claimed the use of the centers for "revolution now", and liberals said that the centers should offer personal and social assistance to the immediate problems of the unemployed. Another "line" had also been established, however, without much discussion. It can be called the "survivalist" line, on the basis of which people from the single-men's hostels and marginal elements found interest in the centers because it provided food, clothes, and shelter. In the end, that was the line that prevailed.

The lack of any concrete established political platform in the centers was the result of the naivety, inexperience and ignorance on the part both of the NDP and the CPC members. This allowed the center to become a hanging-out place for the marginals and definitely not for the unemployed. Further, it allowed the development of personal conflicts and rivalries that cut across the political boundaries of every political force. These personal conflicts dominated the climate in the centers and to a large extent turned all the participants in it against each other. It resulted in the intervention of the AFL in the functions of the center.

After limited investigation and some discussion with the participants, the participants decided that the associate coordinator should not be allowed to eneter the center again. This move however, did not seriously alter the content and form of the centres which had already been determined. Some quality political work did take place in the centres when visitors and some professionals from the university came to the center and provided lectures, and discussions. The "general left content" of the discussions was basically centered around the economic, political, and social problems perpetuating the unemployment crisis.

Even in these activities the problems were not eliminated. The unemployed had been left, by the staff, largely unintroduced to the concepts and the issues despite the fact that a deep appreciation for the visitors and the content of their presentation was expressed. At the same time the unemployed had attacked every social group as being responsible for their conditions. They included in their attack indiscriminantly the politicians, the parties, governments, businesses, women, and youth, as well as the trade union movement and even their fellow workers and their own families.

Nevertheless, these seminars were a start in the right direction according to the initial goals of the U.A.C., that again had not been carried on systematically. The centre criticized both the federal and provincial governments as being responsible for the unemployment crisis. The provincial government was the main target, mainly due to the fact that there was a heritage trust fund that could have been used for job creation. That had not been done. These criticisms were made both publicly as well as in the few seminars that were taking place in the Centre. However, it was the careerism, and the personal conflicts and the political relaxation of some of the staff members that in the end did not allow the development of a concise political identity in the centre.

Practices.

The Center was supposed to be opened at eight a.m. and closed at four p.m. In the early months of its operation the schedule was kept. However, due to

authoritarian management from the associate coordinator the staff had to work until eight p.m. without any lunch break. This kind of management eventually lead to the fact that in the later months of its operation, no one on staff showed up to open the Centre. They would prefer to occupy themselves with any community work than to go to the UAC and be confronted with a tense situation. Also, many volunteers had stopped offering their services as a result of the kind of management that they had to cope with.

One day this conflict led to very high emotions that made many people yell and swear at one another. This was the incident that lead to the removal of the associate coordinator from the Centre. Every day life in the Centre was limited to three kinds of activities: First, typing and mailing letters to the MLAs, the media, and to other groups. Second, providing social services to the interested individuals, collecting and distributing food and clothing, answering questions and doing social work. Third, opening discussions with people who use the Centre. Further, at least once a week, they organized protests in front of city hall and the legislature. For this kind of activity they had to produce banners and leaflets.

Staff and volunteers had also established contacts with community groups and initiated projects with them that were of some interest for the unemployed. For example, a daycare project for unemployed mothers had been initiated called PACE. Women's groups had contributed to it. These contacts were mostly unsuccessful, due to the fact that at the time these groups had to face financial problems of their own. Their own members had declined and they were already overloaded with different types of community work. The most important failure was with the unions that had been under attack. With a membership that was declining rapidly they had very little time then for the unemployed.

However, it goes without saying that the unions had already provided significant funds to the AFL to organize and create the U.A.C.. Other activities included the already mentioned seminars and lectures and films that took place in the

Centre. The most important activity, however, of the Edmonton U.A.C. seems to be the participation in the demonstration that the AFL and the building trades had sponsored against Bill-110, that allowed construction firms to create spin-off companies which could hire non-unionized workers. In that demonstration, the largest in the early 80s, about 3000 workers had participated. Its content was mostly centered around the theme of jobs, wages, and the unemployment problems, which with the adoption of the Bill would have a further adverse impact on the standards of life of the workers.

The provincial government had at that time adopted a "piece-meal" approach to "wage-cuts" and lay-offs by picking one industry at a time in order to initiate its policies and to minimize its opposition. The unemployed from the Edmonton Action Centre had participated in this demonstration under a banner that was signed as the "Organization for the Unemployed." In his speech at the demonstration the new president of the AFL for the first time talked about an organization for the unemployed. That statement became the spark for the boost in the efforts of a large number of the participants in the Centre to initiate discussions for the creation of such an organization. For the next four months after the demonstration (December, 1983 to March, 1984) the participants in the Centre became engaged in a bitter discussion about how, by whom, and when such an organization could be originated.

In terms of the AFL role in the processes and events that were taking place in the centre, it could be described as neither "clear-cut" or "definite" in any sense. Their intervention was minimal in terms of visits to the Centre. It seems the AFL had already developed an opinion of the Centre as a failure mainly due to the personal conflicts that had emerged in it as well as its inability to attract unions and workers to its operations. Their evaluation of the whole program of the U.A.C., it seems from the outset, that they had accepted the positive role that this program had played in revitalizing the socio-political interest of many people about the labour movement and the societal crisis.

The essence of this evaluation, however, (expressed in private discussions between officers of the AFL and staff of the Centre) was that the program had failed to go beyond the level of a social service. It was accepted as a fact that an organization for the unemployed could never really have started from there, if it did not have the support of the unions. Similar was the role and the assessment of the Edmonton District Labour Council (DLC) about the Centre. The Edmonton District Labour Council was having organizational problems of its own in mobilizing the unions in the city to support the Centre. Further, their role was limited to an advisory one, whereas the real needs of the Centres had far exceeded the ability of the DLC to contribute.

Profile.

The administrative measures that had been applied within and upon the Centre as the way by which problems could be solved demonstrates the limitation of this method. Further, individuality rather than collectivity had dominated the climate in the centre. As one staff member described it:

> "In the 1980s, either you make it or not. If not, you're a failure as an individual. And your personal failure does not mean that the society has failed altogether."

Maybe it was the traumatic personal shock that many unemployed had experienced and had expressed quite vividly in the Centre, that in fact manifested the essence of this kind of logic. Individualism, as the basis of the relations that developed in the centre, was to be found among the unemployed and in all the participants of the U.A.C., including the staff. Perhaps this individualization of the social experience had lead coordinators and staff and volunteers to "power trips" that ultimately did not serve the collective interests and needs of the unemployed. Further, it is possible that this individualism had in fact more weight upon the praxis and the consciousness of the politically involved participants so that their political and ideological differences found expression only at a personal level. That could also explain to some extent why the "survivalist" line finally prevailed.

The 1985 AFL Convention

The 1985 Convention was selected as part of the participant observation study for the following reasons. First, in terms of the time that this convention took place, it seems to have imposed upon the members of the AFL the need to establish its directions for the rest of the 1980's. Second, it was this convention which would show how accidental or necessary for the labour movement of the province was the election of a communist as president of the federation. And, third, it was the convention in which the AFL would have to evaluate its work during the early 1980's. My informant was a member of the executive council of the Edmonton District Labour Council with many years of experience and contacts in the labour movement of Alberta and in the AFL.

History.

The 29th convention of the federation took place February 13, 14, 15 and 16, 1985, at the downtown Edmonton hotel Chateau Lacombe, the only unionized facility in town that could serve about 700 delegates of the unions affiliated in the AFL.

It can be categorized as a historical convention for several reasons. First, because as president of the federation a communist was re-elected unopposed for the second time to the top AFL office. At the same time, the president of the Alberta NDP was elected secretary-tresurer also by acclamation. Second, the affirmative action program was established in the federation and became constituionally entrenched. Third, the first report on Solidarity Alberta was presented to the delegates. Fourth, the federation supported the workers of Eaton's who were on strike for the first time in about 40 years, and were trying to achieve a first agreement. And fifth, the AFL, in a dramatic expression of international workers' solidarity sponsored, without the complete approval of the CLC, a Canada tour of delegates from the British coal mine workers who were in the midst of one of the most bitter labour strikes in the history of the labour movement in that country.

Other important events that took place at that convention was the support for the struggle of the native people in the Lubicon Lake Valley, who were fighting in

order to secure their land from oil companies The historical significance of the convention was further underlined by the presence in it of the president of the federal NDP, Ed Broadbent, and of the provincial leader of this party, Ray Martin. Visiting delegations to the convention had been sent by the Saskatchewan and the B.C. Federations of Labour as well as by the CLC. In the same convention an important document was adopted entitled "For Jobs and Recovery: Reduce Work Time With No Loss in Pay." On the basis of this document a resolution for an economic conference was adopted which also met the disapproval of the CLC.

The discussion, however, on the affirmative action program was the one that concentrated the concern and the interest of the delegates for all four days of the convention. It was due to the effort of the president of the federation to develop strong support for the program that a motion challenging his chair was proposed, debated, and at the end was defeated by a two-thirds to one-third of the total Convention vote. The most emotional moment of the convention was the speech of the British coal miner delegates that had the delegate standing for about 15 minutes singing "Solidarity Forever" and yelling slogans such as "Workers United, Never Defeated", and giving a standing ovation to the shaking speaker. The delegates also marched to the downtown Eaton's shop and picketed to show their support for the striking workers.

Structural Organization.

The term structural organization mainly refers to the formal (constitutionally entrenched) and informal (activities for which no provision in the constitution exists) proceedings that took place during the convention. Following the constitutional formalities about the proceedings of the convention, the president of the federation chaired the meetings. A number of rituals took place emphasizing the unity and the goals of the trade union movement. Before that, the registration of the delegates took place, and following the rituals the credential committee's report was presented to the convention about the status of the delegates. Then the agenda of the convention was

approved after a change in the sequence of items. The agenda included activities such as visitors' speeches, announcements, greetings from fraternal organizations, and activities (social, political, cultural) in which the delegates were encouraged to participate. Thus, the different committees made their reports followed by the settling to vote on the specific resolutions that referred to the content of the work of the reporting committee.

Between committee reports and resolutions, visiting speakers were addressing the delegates. On most of the occasions they received statements, funds and votes in support of their causes. As for voting on the proposed resolutions, the resolution committee was reporting to the convention specific resolutions with suggestions for acceptance or rejection. Delegates were asking questions about specific resolutions to the unions, groups and individuals who had brought the resolution, and they were making statements for or against the resolutions. When the number of speakers was exhausted, and when the chairperson felt that the discussion had also been exhausted, the proposed resolutions that had been seconded after each reading to the convention, were put to vote. Delegates voted by raising their hands. In the case of a close vote, the ones who favoured acceptance voted by standing up in order to be counted. Each delegate had the right to one vote and strict parliamentary rules were maintained.

Other informal proceedings, not included in the agenda of the convention, were the different caucus meetings of unions, groups of unions and groups of delegates in which they determined their political and ideological stands towards the various resolutions and issues that were the concern of the convention. They also determined the specific strategies and tactics that they would tend to adapt in order to push for a decision on an issue or a resolution for or against. Finally, they were making decisions about the officers that were going to be nominated and voted upon. Prospective candidates for office in the AFL were trying to appear in these caucus meetings in order to gain support for their campaign. The reporting committees also were meeting to prepare presentations and answers to questions from the delegates. Finally, the

entire staff of the federation was preparing the "information" kits and assisting with any problems that arose.

In the corridor of the convention, information tables had been placed that carried political as well as informational materials. These tables included "Solidarity Alberta," the "CLC," a table for information about the Third World, and two tables, one for the Chilean, and one for the Salvadorean Political Refugees. The NDP also had a table and the "Progress Bookstore," another table with books mostly from the U.S.S.R.. Interestingly enough, the Alberta Department of Labour also had a very impressive booth with numerous materials, leaflets, and books distributed free to the delegates and the visitors to the convention. These materials were supporting the labour politics of the government and the ideology of tripartism. The structural organization (formal and informal) of the convention allowed, therefore, a democratic and highly varied exchange of informations and views upon all the social, political, and ideological issues of the day. The guarantee of the democratic rights to free speech and voting for all the delegates gave to them the opportunity to be responsible for their decisions.

Political Ideologies.

The spectrum of political ideologies that were expressed in the convention varied first, in respect to the party affiliation of the delegates and second, on their personal stands on the social issues. The overall political ideologies that could be identified were trade-unionistic, a party, and a feminist one. Extensive discussions took place about the issue of pollution and peace. Some elements of environmentalist and pacifist ideologies also appeared. What, however, was getting across the lines and in fact forming the overall political stance of the various groups in the convention, were their overt or covert inclinations towards social democracy, communism, and anarchism, and an even more unclear right-wing reaction.

The social democratic and the communist political ideologies found themselves in support of each other on many occasions. Such an alliance was visible on the

question of the implementation of the affirmative action program, in the further support of Solidarity Alberta, in the sponsoring of the delegation of the British Coal Miners, and most of all in the adopted policy papers. One more point should be made about national independence from foreign economic control (U.S.A.), and on the question of peace. On the latter, a split emerged over the question of support of the U.S.S.R.'s peace initiatives in that year. This resulted in the defeat of an important resolution (603) that reads as follows:

> "The U.S. should echo the pledge made by the U.S.S.R. at the United Nations' second special session on disarmament, to declare that they would not be the first to use nuclear weapons in any conflict."

Except for one presentation in favour of the resolution the rest of the discussants were against it in one or another form. The resolution was finally saved by the president of the federation when its wording was amended to demand that such positions should be declared "by all countries with nuclear arsenals." This split between the social democrats and the communists gave the opportunity to the right-wing reaction supported by anarchists who tried to turn the debate from the question of peace to an anti-Soviet, anti-communist attack. The right-wing move on this particular resolution was the most explicit compared to all the other interventions.

The unity between the social democrats and the communists was achieved on two levels: first, in the rallying of both parties in the campaign for the same presidential candidate and secretary-treasurer. In the preparation of documents for the convention, policy papers, committee reports, and in the agenda for the convention, there were also agreements in principle. If however, we consider the content of the speeches, resolutions, the invited visitors (especially the NDP leaders), the policy papers and the agenda of the convention, it can be noticed, that this alliance was formed upon the basis of a "consenting tolerance" between the two parties.

Further, this alliance was due to the overwhelming strength in number that the social democrats had achieved within the trade union movement that forced the communists to adopt a role that had as its axis the pushing of the NDP's position as

far to the left as possible. Thus, the two speeches from the two leaders of the NDP had overwhelmingly an anti-Tory tone and were full of generalities about "fairness against injustice", and promissed selective support to trade-unionist demands, such as, programs for job creation against unemployment. All other issues, nationalization of main industries and banks, withdrawal from NATO, and diversification of the economy were largely ignored. The political formula that they proposed as the solution for the problems that the workers were facing was summarized by Broadbent in his statement that "there is one cure for the Tory ideology, vote for the NDP."

On the other hand, the AFL president's speech despite his different political ideology, had asked for electoral support for the NDP from the delegates. However, he pushed the issue of the "Fightback" campaign that the labour movement needs to undertake in a rigourous, united and socially broader base. He also referred to the policy paper and he appealed for support of its content. Further, in his candidacy speech he promised a progressive and militant stand on the part of his leadership. On numerous occasions he attacked the provincial and federal government's policies as being friends to monopoly and multi-nationals, especially American corporations. On women's issues, he supported the Affirmative Action Program, arguing that it is not just a question of difference between men and women; rather, it is a matter of fighting an injust social system that consciously discriminates against the women, and as such it is a trade-unionist as well as a political issue that the AFL has to take a stance on. Finally, he supported the peace movement and on several occasions he attacked American leaders as militarist interventionists and increasingly inconsiderate of human life on the planet. His overall understanding of social life can be illustrated by the statement that he made in one of his speeches:

> "All issues are political issues - something which could not be said a few years ago. Many times what has been gained in the bargaining table or in the streets (by the labour and the other social movements) was demolished in legislation. Labour is alive, well and strong and growing. Solidarity, the same for enemies and friends. The problems are great but we are greater, and we will prevail, let's fight back."

In discussions with delegates, members of the NDP and of the CLC, a number of observations about the unity of the social democrats with the communists within the AFL can be derived. Until 1985, no formal or public meetings between representatives of the two parties had taken place. Further, no programs or first agreements or any kind of minimum political programs had been achieved. It seems that these two parties do not communicate that much through their leadership but rather through their membership who find themselves fighting together in the same political battles. The main question that continuously emerges in their relationship is not only about whether battle should be fought or not. But also, the political direction and historical significance of each outcome is consistently under debate.

The social democrats in varying degree are moving towards the initiation of reforms as a goal in itself, and they see victory in the elections as their main vehicle. In essence, there is an "objective" understanding in their praxis about the state and its mechanisms for government. This means an appreciation of the state as being above class relationships and to some degree the cause of the existing class acitivies of a society. Therefore, the one who controls or governs the state can go as far to eliminate the class system and bring a qualitative change to social and work life.

The answer of many social democrats to the question, what do they think about support for the communist delegates and of communist support for their own delegates and programs, was basically that "as long as they support us and our programs, we don't care who is who."

Some of them however, perceived that the unity of social democrats and communists in the AFL provides the movement with a "class analysis" that allows political action that will go beyond the parliamentary processes. They also said that only communists in leadership at this time, even though they themselves would prefer only social democrats, can provide the labour movement in Alberta with badly needed militancy and radicalism. On the other hand, in discussion with communists in regard to their relation with the NDP, it should be said that no concrete analysis was provided

as to what should be the content and the form of their unity. The NDP is perceived by communists as a "left" party that allowes unity, coalitions and even a front with the NDP. Thus, it seems that there was not any clear understanding among many delegates about the differences that existed within the NDP, nor about any kind of relation with NDP members, or how it is going to be achieved.

However, the communists' overall political understanding of reforms and elections was diametrically different from the social democrats. Emphasis on reforms for communists was rather a way of bringing people together around issues, to allow political education and agitation and propaganda to develop that will produce an understanding of the relationship that exists among the problems of social life and work. Further, these related problems should be causally linked to the nature of the capitalist system. Therefore, it is the system that needs to change altogether, and not merely its specific institutions. The state for the communists, was the highest manifestation of the bourgeois dominance of social relations. As such the state is not a class innocent, objectified entity but rather the manifestation of the ruling bourgeoisie.

There was, however, a difference between their theoretical elaboration of the state, with actual content of the resolutions which they supported in which the state and the government were perceived as being the benevolent directors of society. The interesting point here is that no criticism or analysis about this kind of understanding of the state, contained in the resolutions, was offered in their statements.

In terms of the political role and nature of elections, the communist perceived elections as a necessary means by which they will clarify their public profile on issues of societal concern. It was, however, non-parliamentary political action that they supported the most, something which was expressed in their total support to "Solidarity Alberta." That was despite the fact that speakers representing "Solidarity Alberta" started their speeches by making an attack on communism. An interesting populist statement, however, was made during the discussion with one CPC member:

> "At this point we can do nothing by ourselves. We need unity and unity needs us. If something is to be changed we all should agree and we all should change it together."

As an overall assessment about the "unity" between social democrats and communists within the AFL, it can be said that this phenomenon seems to be better described if it is understood as a "tendency" rather than as a fact. This "tendency to unity" appears as a necessity produced by the political circumstances that now exist in the AFL and in Alberta society and it is rather of a "spontaneous nature." What would happen to it seems to depend more upon the processes that would take place within these parties themselves rather than in the leadership dialogues and communications in the AFL. These processes are related to the question of party unity and strength, as well as to their understanding of the socio-historical conditions of society and labour.

The anarchists, on the other hand, made their strongest moves on two seemingly carefully selected occasions, first, during the discussion of the policy paper, and second, during the discussion of the Affirmative action program. They also took a stance on two more issues; when the chair of the president was challenged, and when the earlier mentioned resolution of peace was proposed.

In all of these cases, they attacked from an ultra-left position the proposed resolutions and motions. They found most of their support from the right-wing elements in the convention. The right-wing provided their support on the basis of a continuity in the arguments ("As the previous sister/brother was arguing..."). In a sense, they were the "avant-guarde" in the otherwise minimal opposition, and they attacked social democratic-communist unity. The anarchists should not be perceived as the anarcho-syndicalists of the early 19th century. They were, rather, overwhelmingly political and super-revolutionary and avoided debates on trade-unionistic issues and principles. In their speeches, they were not speaking on behalf of a union or of the organized labour movement. They placed their emphasis on a rather abstract concept of working-class in a sense that organized labour does not serve the interest and needs

of this class in any sense. Thus, during the debate on the policy paper, they claimed "It does not serve the long-run nor even the short-run goals of the working class." For them, the long-run goals , at the present socio-historical stage of capitalist development, should be:

(a) The right to livelihood.

(b) Higher wages.

(c) The stopping of war preparations by both the super-powers.

(d) An all out attack on profits.

(e) Full implementation of workers' democratic rights.

The short-term goals should be policies:

(a) For back to work, not short work time.

(b) An all out fight against the system.

Many of the discussions that followed were in support of the policy paper, and most of the arguments rejected the anarchist logic on two grounds. First, they lack an understanding of the presentday socio-historical conditions, especially the impact of high technology on the work process. Second, the labour movement can only be united and organized at this point on the basis of action upon concrete and immediate problems and concerns, not by abstract declarations of revolutionary activity. In the case of the affirmative action program the anarchists opposed it on the basis that:

(a) The program splits the working class in men and women and that is a bourgeois conception.

(b) It does not allow the "fight-back" campaign to be carried on in a unified way.

(c) Women do not necessarily, because of their gender, support the working-class.

(d) Women's militancy should not be given to them but should grow within them.

During the discussion of the affirmative action program at least three lines of arguments were formed. The first one could be described as the radical one and in fact was rallying around the slogan that "We are Women first, and trade-unionists second." During the meeting of the women's caucus the people who supported this

trend pushed for the creation of a separate agenda and to some extent for a code of conduct (something like a constitution) within the AFL. This move was perceived by the people who participated in the meeting as an effort to create a second women's federation within the AFl, that would have as its target the struggle against men, the main cause of women's discrimination. People supporting this trend during the discussion in the convention on several occasions yelled obscenities against the men. In one instance, a speaker pulled a diaper from her bag in order to argue a statement from a delegate who had said that if the "women wanted to have real responsibility in the executive council,they should reject affirmative action and run on their own merit." She counter argued, while shaking and moving the diaper, by saying that it is because affirmative action does not exist in the family for the men, they have failed to share responsibility on their own merit. Finally, this trend was arguing for a 50-50 implementation of affirmative action within the AFL.

The second line developed in the women's caucus meeting was rallying around the slogan that "We are trade-unionists first, and women second;" but it is due to the struggles of women for a long time that affirmative action should be implemented. Otherwise the discriminatory system of social relations that prevails in society and labour would remain. They were promoting a minimum of four positions for women within the AFL, but with no limits to the maximum number. In the end, that was the line that prevailed and found a wide support (two-thirds to one-third) from the delegates. These four women who finally were elected, were all nominated from the women's caucus. Two women who had not participated in the caucus meeting, and were nominated on the floor were defeated. These two women had rallied on a rather liberal line that was implying that: "We are persons first, and second, everything else." No political analysis of what they meant by "persons" was provided nor did any discussion emerge about its content.

The third line was the one expressed by the anarchists and in a sense was a rallying around the slogan "We are working class first, and second, everything else."

This line was against the implementation of the affirmative action program.

The support for the second line took many forms with different contents, and in some instances, became quite colourful in the richness of the arguments. Some examples of the arguments are the following:

> (a) "the affirmative action program is not a victory but a defeat for the labour movement, which we have to accept, because we failed to consider our sisters as equal partners in our struggle."
>
> (b) "The government's implementation of the affirmative action is done in order to split the people according to their gender. The implementation of it in the labour movement is to unite the brothers and the sisters in the 'fight-back.'"
>
> (c) "We are voting for our sisters in the struggle, and not for any Thatcher."
>
> (d) "Women historically have experienced more exploitation, oppression, domination, and discrimination. That's why they will be in a better position to support our rights."

For the support to "Solidarity Alberta," a coalition of groups (churches, unions, building trades, ethnic communities), that operate on the basis of consensus and not on majority vote and which has as its goals "Progressive Change" in the political climate of the province was renewed, but not without criticism. These criticisms and skepticisms were made on the basis that the organization had put two great goals for itself, but nothing important had been acheived. Also, that the unions had failed to provide to the organization, except for financial support, individual commitment and participation. Further, that the only spokesperson for solidarity was the AFL representative. These criticisms were originated by the representative of the A.U.P.E. in the organization, and they were targeted mainly at the leadership of the AFL. However, the main thrust of the support was greater than the criticisms and its logic was summarized in the statement of one of the delegates:

> "The volcano has not erupted yet, but Solidarity Alberta maybe will help the volcano to erupt."

Practices.

As can be concluded from the information collected from attendance at the various caucus meetings, a real battle was constantly in progress of as to how the floor at the convention was going to be controlled. The significance of floor control is directly related to the question of which resolutions and motions will be passed, and even what candidates are to be voted. "Floor control" is closely targeted to the undecided and to the "not-so-sure" delegates. It is based on several mechanisms.

Specifically, efforts by the different groups are made to control,

(a) The chair;

(b) The microphone;

(c) The tables of the delegates.

Next to decide which resolutions should be more debated and which aspect of them should be emphasized, is a strategic goal that can set the climate of the convention. It is also important to decide who is going to speak for or against an issue, and at what time during the debate they will intervene. These are the basic mechanisms of control during the actual processes of the convention.

Prior to the convention, however, a struggle for the overall control of the climate of the convention took place with respect to the delegates from the unions, the proposed resolutions, the visitor speakers, the activities during and after the convention and its overall operation. In the times of intermission of the work of the convention, the caucus meeting, and the individual and group were lobbying each other in order to ensure further support for their particular interests. For the overall climate of the convention, the media played an important role, most of the time negative, as was argued by the president of the federation.

The president, in his criticism of the media made to the convention, said that the convention was reported in the local newspapers only third in sequence after a report on the provincial government's caucus, and after the small businessmen's

conference that -curiously enough- took place in Edmonton at the same time as the convetnion. Further, media ignored the "fight-back" campaign and portrayed it as "labour aggression", and that the resolutions on affirmative action were mostly ignored or not emphasized enough. The media had also ignored the British Coal miner's delegation and speech. The crisis in the building trades was shown as mostly the result of internal conflicts within the trade-union movement.

Finally, the demonstration and the picketing of the Eaton's retail stores could be perceived, even though it was fully supported, as a mere exercise of union Solidarity. Posters, and slogans were basically of a trade-union content and no other issues were raised during the whole process. It lasted for about half an hour. An interesting event happened during the demonstration. That was the verbal support to the marchers by policemen in uniform who were wishing them "good luck in their struggle."

Profile.

The most important observation that can be made about the overall profile of the 1985 Convention, seems to be the one that has to do with the stage of the politico-ideological and praxial development of the AFL, and in consequence of the labour movement of Alberta. The convention showed a high internal mobilizing within the AFL that had to do with the enhancement and strengthening of its unity. The rallying around the support of a militant leadership as well as the organizational promotion, in terms of strong responsibility of the women trade-unionists and finally, the recent support to "Solidarity Alberta" demonstrated the move of the AFL to firm and strategically advanced positions.

The moving force behind those changes in the AFL was the support of the "fight-back" campaign. This campaign required more in-depth mobilization of the trade-union movement in Alberta as well as more unity within it.

The second point that can be raised in regards to the profile of the convention has to do with the political inexperience of the AFL.

It is true that all the proceedings that took place within the AFL, both formal and informal, were highly democratic. The same holds true for the stance that the AFL reported on the various issues that affect the life and work conditions of the majority of the people in the province. Democracy, however, is not an absolute concept but a relative one, that is replaced and expressed in relation to the overall socio-historical context. The AFL, in contrast with the processes in the larger society initiated by the state and the government, has become more open and democratic. At the same time, however, this convention has not challenged or even reached the limits of the system of bourgeois democracy. Unity, therefore, within the AFL, and that holds true for any group that has contributed to it, has an advanced democratic populist character. Nevertheless, it remains within the constraints of bourgeois democracy and trade union politics. What will happen to this unity if the limits of bourgeois democracy will be overcome by the AFL? Will the AFL split politically as happened in the 40s and the 50s, or is it going to advance towards a different type of democracy?

Finally, trade unionism, was proven to be stronger than any political party or of its ideology. The latter were supported only as long as they did not go beyond the political and ideological level of the trade union movement as a whole.

These kinds of questions do not seem answerable solely on the grounds of the AFL. First of all this would have to do with the ability of the progressive and largely left parties to overcome the barriers that exist within the labour movement, and to reach the rank-and-file membership of the unions. The critique of "Solidarity Alberta" indicates that this has not happened yet. That is because individual commitment to trade unionists principles appears to have only limited possibilities for the development of a political theory of action. Given a possible restraint of the democratic rights of labour and of the people of the province, unity can be achieved as a result of the well manifested and organized will of the majority of the working class that overcomes ideology and yet expresses itself on very ideological grounds.

This kind of political ideology directs conscious action against the totality of the social system by considering one by one its specific, as well as its general goals and problems. Such ideology has not developed in any collective sense within the AFL, but it has been manifested in individual presentations and in the stance of a number of delegates who did not, at least directly, affiliate with a specific political party. The 1985 Convention, however, has consolidated the political-ideological change that took place within the AFL 1983 Convention. The 1986 Gainers' Strike captured the imagination of many people, and the strikers found wide support for their struggle. The AFL played an influential role in the strike as well as gathering national support for it.

The Gainers Strike.

The research on the Gainers strike includes about 20 participant observations (PO) that took place in the first four months of the strike (June - September 1986). The POs consisted of participation, a) in the picket line, from day one of the strike; b) in meetings by the AFL, different political parties, and the strike committee itself; and c) discussions and informal interviews with a number of participants in the strike.

Our main informant was a staff member of the AFL, who had actively participated in the processes and in the events that took place during the strike, and who had the first bad experience with "police brutality" and the "state's aggression", as he called it. He was one of the 1000 people who got arrested, and thrown in jail for participation in the picket line.

The main issue in the discussion of the Gainers strike is about the qualitative change that took place not only in the consciousness and the praxis of the AFL and the labour movement of the province, but also of the country. This change becomes more evident especially if it is compared with the AFL's UACs, 1983. The exercise of power by the state, as perceived by the participants of the strike, was not simply in the name of "law and order", but rather an open effort to protect the interests of the capitalist owner of the plant.

History.

In 1986, the working class all over the world was celebrating the 100 years since the Haymarket events in Chicago in 1886, where workers, the police and the state, clashed over the issue of 8-hour work-day. In 1986 the AFL and the labour movement in Canada had promoted as their basic strategic target, the "reduction in work-time with no loss in pay". On May 1st 1986, the "Dandelions" and "Solidarity Alberta" had organized the first important May day rally since the 1940's. This rally attracted about 2,000 people, who marched the streets of the city, and demonstrated at the Legislature shouting "jobs, jobs, jobs", and "reduction of work-time, no-loss in pay". In the same year the NDP was able, due in large part to the support of organized labour, to get 16 seats in the Legislation from the Tories. By September, as the Federation was preparing for the celebration of Labour day, 5,000 to 7,000 workers had carried pickets and had participated in strike activity throughout the province. Strikes had taken place at the Gainers plant by the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCWU), local 280; at Lakeside Packers in Brooks, (that had been going on for 2.5 years); at Pacific Western Airlines (where three unions had participated in a coalition); at Fletchers; Suncor; at the Liquor Control Board; and at the Thibault Roman Catholic Public School Board in Morinville. All of these strikes took place basically, for the same reasons: job security, no concessions, reduction of work-time, and no loss in pay.

From the Gainers strike, and with the initiative of the AFL, the Change-the-Alberta-Labour-Laws campaign emerged to become the most important issue for every strike in Alberta since then. The thrust for this campaign was and still is towards making the government stop:

a) The creation of spin-off non-unionized companies by companies which are unionized.

b) The hiring of strike breakers (scabs), by companies during strike.

c) The cancelling of contracts after a 25-hour lock-out.

d) The arbitrary cancelling by the employers of pension plans, and other deferred earnings.

During the 1980's the meat packing industry in Canada and particularly in Alberta,was faced with tremendous competition from the USA monopolies. Plants were closing and moving out to other provinces or even to the USA, and markets were forever lost. This was basically the result of the huge concessions that the workers in the USA were forced to accept, under the attack on unions and union rights, initiated by Reagan's "conservative revolution", which had swept the USA.

These events in the 1980's were in fact another indication of the restructuring of the profit-making processes that the capitalist economies had to go through, mostly at the expense and the possible destruction of organized labour. Thus,the intensification of capital concentration and accumulation in the hands of the larger and the most powerful corporations would not be interrupted.

The policies and actions adopted by the owner of the Gainers plant, a member of the conservative Fraser Institute in BC, can be seen as a primary example of how big business was resolving the big economic crisis at that time. The Fraser Institute had developed a corporate agenda which advocated that the crisis can be solved by letting the "forces of the market" dictate the direction of economic development. Further, they had expressed their belief in the "free enterprise system", with no government or state intervention, unless such intervention was to allow big business to accumulate more wealth. The path to accumulation lay not in industrial investment, but in restraints on public spending through an attempt at reducing the deficit, a reduction or even elimination of social programs, faster introduction of high technology, an increase in unemployment, a decrease in the inflation rates, and an increase in interest rates.

By 1985, it had become evident that:

> "The Tories (had) a clear agenda - an end to universality, deregulation, deficit reduction rather than job creation, restricted access to Unemployment Insurance , privatization, and re-armament - and it (would have to) take more than words behind close doors to make them

depart from it."(Panitch, 1985)

Finally, through capital that the owner of the company was able to accumulate, from rather spurious deals according to one interviewee, in real estate and land development companies, he bought the old Swifts plant and turned it to Gainers. The workers in the plant, when it was still Swifts, and even in the early years of Gainers, had experienced as they called it, "personalised management". Since 1984, however, when the owner hired an American as manager of the plant, who had acquired a reputation as a specialist in meat packing and as a union buster, the conditions of work changed dramatically. The new manager allegedly got an initial salary, of $200,000 per year, and within a year he was granted, in the early months of the new government in Canada, the status of a landed immigrant. At the same time he got a raise of $100,000, plus $10,000 each year after, plus 10% share in profits over $5,000,000. Additionally, he got full medical coverage, a spacious house for his family, and a company car.

In 1984 the workers were forced to take a $4-$5 cut in wages, from $12 per hour, down to $8-$7 per hour. They initiated the strike, but as they walked out of the plant, they were awaited by unemployed non-union strike breakers who had come to take over the plant. At that time the leadership of the union proceded to compromise, a move that met with great resentment by the membership and resulted (within about a year) in the change of union leadership During those years the company was able to make 25-30 million dollars profit without changing the prices of its products, through the intensification of production which went up from 2.5 to 8.5 tonnes per week, and of course through wage cuts in the worker's cheques.

At the same time the company was able to buy two more plants in the USA, and to expand its distribution plants all over the country. Workers in the USA plants were also forced to make concessions, but nothing compared to what had been experienced by their fellow workers in Alberta. Additionally, workers in the plants were reduced in numbers, to compulsory overtime, and to tremendous pressures to

increase production. Even workers who were in the compensation boards, and were occupied with clerical work, at one or the other point in time, were forced to do manual work sometimes with devastating effects to their health. Within two years the rate of industrial accidents in the plant reached the top on the national scale. Gainers, formally one of the safest plants in the nation, became one of the most dangerous. Further, workers who were not willing to work overtime, or who were late by a few minutes for work, or who had arguments with the foreman, or whose production rate in one day was lower, were laid off, or suspended from work, or received financial penalties. Management also demanded, following the Japanese example, a blind faith in the company, so that, "we will become number one" in the world.

Though largely inexperienced, the new union leadership asked for negotiations with the company long before the expiry date of their contract (May 13th 1986). Their demand was parity (11-12 dollars per hour), with the rest of the industry. The company however, demanded further concessions to 4.5 dollars per hour, and the establishment of a two-tier system - new workers would get a lower initial wage than workers with a year or more seniority.

A month prior to the expiry date of the contract, the company advertised in a newspaper, that a large labour force was to be hired in the plant after May, and that positions were now open for application. To the union it became clear that the company was willing to take advantage of the high unemployment rate in the city, and to proceed to destroy the union. Further, company people had visited the single men hostels in town, and had openly recruited strike breakers.

In June 1st, 1986 at 12:00 pm, and with a 99% mandate, the union struck with all of its 1,080 members, in order to open a new chapter in the labour history of the province. The momentum and the militancy of the strike was, according to one trade union leader, of a quality that "you meet once in a life time". In the first two weeks of the strike, the workers who were picketing in shifts, had in essence put the plant in siege. At any given time there were about 200-300 workers around the plant,

controlling its entrances. They had also placed a trailer right across the street from Gainers as their headquarters. They battled with busses bringing in strike breakers, whose drivers without stopping, were directing them against the crowd of workers who were blocking the gates of the plant. They fought with the riot police, and they ignored injunction orders from the court that had restricted the number of workers in the picketing line. The drivers of the busses were allegedly receiving a $1,000 bonus for each bus making it through the plant gates. As far as the police were concerned, 50% of its force was occupied in the Gainers strike, with a cost of about $5,000,000 to the city of Edmonton.

These practices by the police and the court, created a tremendous resistance from the workers, who called them "Nazi" and that "this a is not a democracy, but a police state, just like Chile and S. Africa". One thousand people were arrested who, ignoring the consequences of their act, were standing in front of the police, asking them "to pick me, pick me". At the same time, many of the workers were hurt by the police or by the busses, which on occasion were dragging people under them for several meters.

From day one of the strike, the AFL provided leadership and assistance to the union and was able to set up a strike committee, where the labour movement and "Solidarity Alberta" were also represented. This committee initiated a very successful national boycott on Gainers products, political support to the strikers from political parties, social groups, the labour movement of the country, and from individual citizens. Further, they released information about secret contacts of the company with the Tories, something that brought an attack from the provincial government against the leadership of the AFL. The AFL also sparked the campaign to "change the labour laws", and organized groups of unionists and citizens that carried this campaign in different forms all over the country.

Finally, the AFL mobilized the labour movement, in an extraordinary meeting, where 315 delegates participated, on a 24 hour notice, in the greatest labour

demonstration at the legislature, whith 10,000 people participating.

During the period of the strike the company had approriated the $10 million labour pension plan of the workers, and had provided jobs to the strike breakers, without rehiring the striking workers. At the same time, the company was found by the industrial relations board as "bargaining in bad faith", not offering or making any proposals for negotiation to the union. Earlier a report by the same board started that Gainers should accept all the demands of the union, that is, release the pension plan, rehire the striking workers. The company had asked for the decertification of the union and had threatened a law suit against the arrested people for disturbing the "Industrial Peace" at the plant.

Along with these developments, there were a few more situations which demonstrated the impact of the strike upon the company. First was the fact that behind the company there was an international bank financing the plant's operation during the strike. Second, the company was operating at a loss, due to a) the boycott from small and big businesses, and b) a high turnover of about 3,000 workers within the 6 months of the strike. Third, the company tried to sell its products below cost, so that it would not lose markets. Fourth, the company sought to sell its products outside the province and especially in the USA. Lastly, the production in the plant fell from 1.400 cases per day to 250 cases per day.

All these events, along with the insistence of the company on its early demands, the high profile of the company to address those demands with theoretical and ideological arguments supporting the "free enterpise system", and the personal aggressive style of the owner of the company, caused the labour leaders to support and later to argue that a hidden agenda established from the higher possible centres of decision- making on policies, was in fact in place. The content of this agenda will be discussed later on.

It seems therefore, that the grounds for the events that occured during the strike had been well established by the company and by provincial policies. The

workers had felt that to them there is only one alternative open, "to fight with all we have" for their democratic rights, and to protect themselves from police violence.

In the last months of the strike the company, as part of its policy, started to hire Vietnamese immigrants who neither spoke the English language, nor knew what was really going on. This labour force by the end of the strike, constituted 60% of the 600 strike breakers, and were paid minimum wages of 4 and 5 dollars per hour.

Finally, after the second week of the strike, the entire dispute was passed to the courts in order to make a decision. By December it had become obvious that the company was, at least politically, defeated, and had agreed to hire back all the strikers, to lay off most of the strike breakers, return the pension plan, and was even forced to negotiate with the union which the company had refused to recognize earlier. However, parity with the rest of the industry was not given to the unionised workers. Nevertheless, the company was not able to force the further concession of $4 to $5 per hour. On the contrary, the company agreed that there is going to be no change in the wages in the first two years, and a 3% increase will be given in the third and fourth year.

The union agreed, but not full-heartedly, to accept these proposals, supported by the representatives of the national office. The final vote was 68% in favour and 32% against, with the president of the union openly declaring that he was against this kind of settlement.

The government on the other hand was forced to create a committee to examine the labour laws. They undertook at public expense a highly controversial world tour of industrialized nations "to gain experience and knowledge" about labour laws. In the public hearing the AFL and its allies made an impressive appearance - for the first time in the history if this kind of hearings - by surpassing in quantity and quality the presentations made by the business representatives. Further, the AFL announced its descision to organize in 1987 the first major May day rally since 1930, and the first Annual Labour Festival in North America. The main theme of these

events still remains "change the labour laws" and a program of well attended regional meetings by unionists and activists was initiated. Finally, the May day events in 1987 attracted about 4,000-5,000 demonstrators, that promised to "change not only the labour laws in the province, but also the government". It was not surprising therefore, that the leadership of the AFL in their 1987 convention, received an overwhelming renewal, for the third time, of their mandate with about 82% in favour and 18% against in delegate votes.

Structure and Organization.

There were at least three organizational aspects in the way that the strike was conducted. First, it was the union with its representatives from the national office, second, it was the strike committee, formed after a resolution that had passed an earlier CLC convention. The groups that were represented in this committee were the union and their representatives from the National office, the Building Trades, the Edmonton District Labour Council, representatives from the CLC, Solidarity Alberta, the National Farmers Union, and the AFL. Representatives from some other unions had participated in its proceedings.

The third organizational aspect was the different political and social groups who had come to support the strike and who had organized their membership in participating in various forms of activities, including public meetings, picketing, distributing information, leaflets, and assisting in the production and distribution of posters referring to the issues of the strike.

The union leadership was stationed in the trailer, placed right across from the plant. A loud speaker systemplaced on its top provide information for the strikers and their supporters, as well as to conduct public relations and to attract attention. The meetings of the union were taking place in the Polish Hall, downtown Edmonton. A newsletter was issued by the union. Further, the union, following the advice of the AFL, and after overcoming its inexperience in conducting a strike, established a sophisticated method of picketing by shifts in front of all the gates of the plant. At

the same time, other groups were criss-crossing the town and the province placing posters of support on the lawns of houses, and distributing leaflets. Another group of strikers were participating with other unionists and activists in the production of these posters, in the headquarters of the AFL. Altogether, about 10,000 posters were produced.

Another group of strikers had taken upon themselves the role of the "strike breaker chaser" conducting themselves in life-threatening activities of chasing with motorbikes, the cars and the busses of the strike breakers. This group was in fact acting against the will of the union, which had forbidden this kind of activities. Finally, when the shifts in the plant were changing, there were from 300 to 600 workers, depending on the time of the day, that were blocking with their bodies the entrance of busses to the plant.

The strike committee, in the first two weeks of the strike met almost every day, and at least once every week thereafter. They organized, along with the national boycott of Gainers products, and the lawn sign campaign, the surprise picketing against the owner of the company, who was caught on return from a trip to the USA, in the company of some important political figures, and the picketing of the Oilers hockey games, (the owner of Gainers is the owner of the Oilers hockey team), in Northlands and in Montreal at an exhibition game.

Interestingly enough, the father of the best player of hockey in Canada, (Gretzky), an old trade unionist himself, refused to cross the picket line, whereas his son did not offer any support to the workers.

The strike committee, through the initiative of "Solidarity Alberta", had also initiated a protest in front of the plant, where the protesters carried a huge cross, synbolizing the sufferring of the workers, as being similar to the sufferrings of Christ. They had also helped to organize the June 12th rally to the Legislature.

The representative of the National office of the union was responsible for turning the strike from one conducted through non-parliamentary proceedings, to one

that was resolved by the courts. This change of strategy, and, eventually, in the direction of the strike, resulted in the loss of the militant edge and of public support, that had been originated by the mass activity undertaken by the AFL and the strike committee. Further, the political initiative was taken away from the AFL, with a loss of a great deal of the public interest attracted in the early stages.

The public meetings initiated by different political parties, especially by the NDP and the CPC, did not find a great deal of support from the strikers nor from the public. However, these parties had been able to distribute and in fact sell a great deal of their literature and further, they popularized their positions.

Political Ideologies.

What the trade unionists had suspected as a hidden agenda for the Gainers strike, developed by the highest possible centers of decision making on labour policies, was never proven, but rather speculated. However, it had a significant effect upon the way the labour movement showed the historic importance of this strike, and upon its determination to make it the ground on which they will challenge and eventually defeat the thrust of "neo-conservatism" in government labour policies.

The main item in this agenda was speculated to be that the ruling circles had chosen Alberta, after BC, to test a new "piece-meal" approach in their policy, for restraints, wage cuts, and union busting. Further it was thought that Alberta, being faithful to the conservative government of the province, would not react, or would react very little to their policies.

At the same time, the owner of the company was an aggressive businessman with a high public profile and very good national and international conections in financial and governmental circles. The whole question, therefore, was how much support and faith do the people of Alberta have for the new developments in the free enterprise system? Also what does it really mean to have a militant leadership at the head of the labour movement of the province? Finally, how much resistance from labour and the people of the province would be originate, if the state and the police

exercise their power?

Even though this kind of thinking was encountered on several occasions in discussions with labour leaders, no final assessment was made by them so far as concerns the experience and the knowledge that the state and the government have accumulated from the strike. What remains as a fact, however, is that under the militancy of the workers and under public discontent with government politics, a rapid change occurred in the policies of the government with regard to the strike. A split in opinions emerged within government circles, as well as business and other high cirlces of the province. The government, from initial open support for the company, started to play the role of mediator. Even the new minister of labour, on June 19th had asked the company to return the jobs to the strikers. An important number of Liberal politicians supported the strikers, and in the rally their leaders spoke in favour of the workers.

In business circles, owners of grocery retail stores, super markets, and small convenience shops supported the boycott of Gainers products. Finally, many of the people who had supported the conservatives in the previous provincial election were condemning the aggression of the company and especially of its owner, and had become disentchanted with the government's role during the strike.

On the other hand, the role of the NDP was problematic. Only once did the labour critic of this party visited the headquarters of the union, and only one of the new elected NDP MLA's had come out in open support for the strike. Further, after the first week of the strike, rumors among the strikers and their supporters had emerged that the NDP believed the strike was already lost. The NDP did not contradict those rumors thoughout the stike. Finally, the leadership of the party was reported in the media as congratulating the police, shaking hands, for their effort to keep law and order. The stance, therefore, that the NDP leadership seems to have adopted towards the strike was one of "wait and see". Nevertheless, the trade unionist members of the party, privately had criticised this stand, and demanded open support

of the strike by the party.

In the rally, on 12th of June, 1986, this support was given, with the provision that the workers will achieve nothing in their effort to change the labour laws, unless they elect the NDP as their government. This, however, goes without saying, that many rank and file NDP members offered full active support and help in numerous forms, to the strikers. This demonstrated a major political difference between leadership and membership in the party.

The CPC on the other hand, took a different stance. It saw the strike as an opportunity to develop its contacts with the labour movement. Several members of this party along with the president of the AFL, were arrested several times, and thrown in jail. The CPC, had a consistent presence in the picketing line in which they distributed and sold their documents and press. Further they initiated the campaign for the nationalization of the plant, but failed to develop a promising dialogue or campaign over the issue. However, about 50% of the strikers had at one or another point supported Nationalization, but the issue died basically due to the inability of the CPC to institutionalize the debate. One important issue in the work of the CPC in the labour movement was the fact that it was the first time since the 1930's that the party was able to sell about 300 copies of its paper, and to distribute another 400 during the rally. Along with this development, two of its prominent members ed influenced the course of action within the strike committee. Further, its members taught, in a variety of meetings with members of the unions, how to conduct a public campaign and even how to produce glue for the posters. An elementary skill, but no union member knew it.

A number of anarchists had also participated in the strike, and several of them were arrested again and again. However, the fact that only a few hours after their arrest, they were seen back in the picketing line, was met with increasing suspicion among the strikers. The anarchists were shouting slogans such as "This is not Russia", and they were verbally attacking the two super-powers. They also attacked the

proposal for the nationalization of the company. Instead they were pushing for a take-over of the plant by the workers. At the same time they were attacking the AFL for not taking a more militant course of action in regards to the strike. During the rally they carried a huge red banner with the hammer and the sickle on it. In the demonstration in front of the Legislature, they made sure to place it in the middle of the protestors, close to the camera's of the TV and the press. They were also carrying posters of, as one trade unionist called, "Robin Hood slogans", demanding to take money from the rich and give it to the poor.

However, the most important political-ideological issues that emerged during the strike, were first, the qualitative changes that occured in the consciousness of the workers, and of the people of Alberta, and second, the debate over the kind of political action that should be inititiated - parliamentary and the courts, or non-parliamentary and the streets. In regards to the first issue, the workers seeing the police brutality, and the aggression of the state, started to question the kind of democracy that existed in Alberta. As one interviewee stated:

> "This is not democracy. How can it be democracy? I am a tax payer and I pay for the police to protect people who have not paid taxes , and beat the hell out of me and throw me in jail."

Another one said: "How can it be democracy, when they take everything from you when you strike?"

The state was also attacked as a police state, just like Chile. They also referred to the manager of the plant as an "American goon", and they demanded that the "Yankee (should) go home". The strike had managed to unite the unions. In the picket lines there were more people from all ethnic backgrounds. Some of them were Polish immigrants who had left their country in the light of labour unrest in that country. They expressed their surprise at what they had encountered, and on several occasions said that these things do not happen even in Poland.

Another political aspect in the political-ideological climate of the strike, was the massive and active participation of women, who not only protested in front of the

gates, but also took into their own hands almost the entire public relations campaign in front of the plant. Further, the spouses of many of the workers, as well as the women strikers played an important role in the campaign by offering help to the striker's families, by gathering food, clothing, toys and money for them. Despite the assistance thus offerred, and the funds for the strike donated by the labour movement, several families broke down as a result of the immense pressure.

A real battle of ideas was also conducted through the press. Numerous letters to the editors, the majority of the them supporting the workers were published, showing the public interest in the strike, and the change in the attitude towards the labour movement. Regularly conducted polls by the unions and the media, also demonstrated widespread support for the strike, and criticisms of the role of government.

In regards to the second issue - the "kind of political action" that should be employed - it seems that the representatives from the national union, were themselves surprised with the militancy, radicalism and determination of the local. Traditionally trade unionists and leaders in the ideology of the tripartism, pushed by need for a narrow-minded protection of the autonomy of their union from the higher bodies and especially from the AFL preferred the route of "consultation" with the company, and the government's institutions. They managed to give to the courts the authority, through their lawyers, to decide the outcome of the strike.

For the first time the national office of the union offered an educational program to this particular local on the role of the unions and the way to conduct themselves. However, not one political education course was offerred; the lessons concentrated on the technical issues of trade union policies. Interestingly enough, this union was the same one that signed a consensus agreement in USA plants, at the same time that the Gainers strike was going on in Edmonton.

Practices.

Most of the practices used during the strike have already been mentioned. However, a final point should be made about the question of violence in the picket lines, as well as about the social activities that emerged within the union as a result of the strike. It is true that the strikers reacted fanatically against the strike breakers when the busses were trying to enter the gates of the plant. They in fact managed to do exactly that several times, before the riot police appeared and before the court injunctions. Thus, they restricted the number of people entering the plant to only a few. But all these things happened, as one worker described because: "If I let them in, they will get the bread from the table of my family". Further, the action of the bus drivers was illegal, not to stop when the striker were standing in front of them. Also when the police started to arrest the people no court injunction existed restricting the number of strikers in front of the plant.

The workers had perceived the declarations of the government and of the company for a non-violent conduct of the strike and of a peaceful resolution of it, as being a great hypocrisy. For they had felt that the latter had already excercised violence against them, when they forced them into the dilemma: having a job that turns their work into slave labour and lowers their standards of life way below the poverty level; or having no jobs at all.

In their speeches, the leaders of the union and of the labour movement, repeatedly said:

> "We are law binding citizens, with no criminal records, we don't want violence. Violence has been forced upon us and has restricted our democratic and human rights."

These events created the early climate of the strike, and pushed the workers to feel proud if they were arrested, declaring: "You can jail the striker but you cannot jail the strike".

Once more, it has been shown that the workers do not really have respect for the civil laws as such. In fact, as the Gainer's strike shows the workers perceived the

laws as the legal manifestation of a social order antagonistic to their own class interests. Under the given circumstances they repeatedly defied the law and its organs of enforcement.

As far as their emphasis upon the "Change the Labour Laws" campaign, it can be argued that it testifies to the actual limitations and potentialities of trade unionism in civil society.

In regards to the social life of the strikers during the strike, it was significantly enhanced, as the workers took the opportunity in developing closer contacts with each other, provided through meetings and the various activities in which they were engaged. They developed a better understanding and appreciation of each other, and friendships emerged. Families visited each other for support and socialization, and even parties were organized.

Except for the actual support that they were providing to each other - sharing the food for example, was an important one - the workers created a group of singers. A song was written and later produced as a record, and was distributed for the financial support of the strike. It was played in various occasions. The microphones that had been placed upon the roof of the trailer, regularly informed people about individual problems and feelings that the workers had developed during the strike. The most important feeling of all, as one of the strikers said, was the one of "unity and worthiness". This feeling emerged out of the understanding of their social responsibility as they were gaining more public support. "It is not anymore for the money, it is for them", (referring to the public), a striker said. Such words were heard again and again. They make one wonder what happened to the "individualism" that has been advertized so much and promoted by all sources of information.

Taking all these aspects under consideration, it is not surprising that despite all the social and personal problems the workers experienced through these six months they agreed with great reluctance and resentment to terminate their strike, without an absolute victory. The political victory, however, of the strike was highly significant.

Its momentum is still in place, as shown by the May day events in the 1987 demonstration, and as the campaign for "change the labour law" is receiving more and more support throughout the country.

By December the government through closed-door consultations with the company managed to "persuade" the latter to accept negotiations with the union and to proceed to a settlement. What was actually discussed between the government and the company was never made public. Union speculations suggest the company achieved an important financial deal, which counter balanced the loss of future profits, due to the consensus agreement that after all the struggling union forced upon the company.

Profile.

The main observation that can be made with regards to the overall profile of the strike, is the fact that its significance, its content and form have to a great extent transcended the boundaries of labour politics in Alberta and perhaps in Canada. Not only was the strike at Gainers able to combat successfully the "neo-conservatism" of the government in Alberta, and create splits among the dominant circles of the province, but at the same time it was able to unite a great number of people in their efforts to achieve and to maintain a better future. As such it provided Alberta society with an alternative vision for the future. Further, it brought Alberta's labour movement in tune with its great past of the 1910's and the 1920's. No wonder that in the first annual labour festival where the 75th anniversary of the AFL was celebrated, one of the themes was "75 years of struggle and progress for Alberta's labour". Further, the festival was a review of the labour history in Alberta and a cultural opening for the future. The militancy and the radicalism of the workers was accompanied by a significant degree of ideological politicalization. However, as the president of the AFL has argued:

> "The political victory is never given. We need to go to our affiliates again and again to show them what they have achieved. The others are still very strong. We need to keep working on the minds and the hearts of

our people."

This statement probably explains why a number of Gainers workers after the strike, felt defeated and left the company in resentment. Also, why some unions in the province have become quite cautious about undertaking a strike, and why some of them are willing to accept concessions right away, as the workers did at McGavin's. The sufferings of the workers who went on strike at Gainers, the state aggression and the police brutality, have left their marks upon the consciousness of the workers in Alberta. This outcome may not be exactly what the policy-makers of the country and of Alberta wanted.

The question of which trend is going to prevail in the consciousness of the Alberta workers - fear of the cultural terrorism that the Gainers strikers have experienced, the knowledge of their power - again cannot possibly be answered here. In the end, it has to do with how much sufferring can they take as a result of a crippling capitalist economy and a deteriorating political life, as well as, what kind of political education will the strike experiences ultimately signify. However, as the president of the AFL has argued:

> "History is teaching us that suppressed people can take so much suppression. After that, they revolt."

Comments.

The three Participant Observation studies of the activities of the AFL, represent three qualitatively different kinds of activities. The UAC is a case with little union involvement, or social endeavor. The convention re-established the AFL in the hearts and the minds of the people within new sociohistorical conditions. The Gainers strike is a trade union activity with great social participation, and implications still echoing. What connects these activities, is the willingness of Alberta labour to move towards more militant and political grounds, and to play an even more important role, in the direction of social life in the province. The AFL constantly throughout these activities has put to the test its unity and strength, and has

experimented for the first time with new forms of conduct. A judgement of failure or of success would be irrelevant. One thing remains true: the AFL is on the march, and in its process of becoming moves toward a more important role in the politics of the province, and even of the country.

From the UAC to the Gainers strike, the AFL has achieved major changes in its tactics and strategies. That, however, is not true for all the groups and participants in these activities. These studies indicate how the AFL was able to reproduce the developmental processes that lead to its further politicalization and radicalization. But this process never worked out in the way they had initially been perceived and pursued.

In the case of the NDP, this experience produced an adaptive evolution within the new sociohistorical circumstances in labour and society. On the other hand, the members of the staff in the UAC and the national UFCW representatives seek to conserve their careers within the labour movement. Further, the latter were also interested to conserve the status quo of their union. Finally, it was the experience of the workers at Gainers who reacted against the company and the state in order to secure their own survival. In the 1985 convention all these tendencies had appeared in some degree. It is impossible, however, to pass a final judgement at this point as to how progressive has the labour movement in Alberta become, or how deeply concerned it is with its future existence.

Further, no clear decision can be made, as to whether the labour movement in Alberta has rejected the social system altogether, or whether it has simply undertaken strikes in order to adopt itself within the new sociohistorical conditions. In fact it is not certain whether such evaluation is ever possible, in a definitive sense, if the dialectical nature of history is taken into consideration. It is really up to the protagonists of this social drama to provide the final word of what kind of personal experience and knowledge they have accumulated through their participation in the activities of the AFL. In the process of conveying what all this means to them, and in the end to the labour movement in Alberta, the final "brush stroke" in the picture of the culture of the AFL may some day become possible.

VIII. CHAPTER VIII: A LOOK AHEAD: AFL s FUTURE ALTERNATIVES.

"Go back again, now you have seen us, and your outward eyes have learned that in spite of all the infallible motions of your day there is yet a time of rest in store for the world, when mastery has changed into fellowship- but not before. Go back again, then, and while you live you will see all round you people engaged in making other lives -lives which are not their own while themselves care nothing for their own real lives- men who hate life though they fear death. Go back and be the happier for having seen us, for having added a little hope to your struggle. Go on living while you may, striving, with whatsoever pain and labour must be, to built up little by little the new day of fellowship, and rest, and happiness.

Yes, surely! and if others can see it as I have seen it; then it may be called a vision rather than a dream."
From Morris, W. Notes from Nowhere. 1979:182

A. UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS.

The following interviews were conducted during the last four months of 1986, and include about 10 hours of taped discussions. The discussions were concerned with the particular involvement of the interviewees in the activities of the AFL. These activities were the UAC in Edmonton in 1984, the Gainers strike in 1986, and the officers election in the executive council of the AFL in 1985.

The interviewees were, one volunteer activist, a staff member of the AFL, and a high ranking officer of the AFL. The volunteer activist, who had also served as a staff member of the UAC for a short time, was a self-proclaimed anarchist. The staff member of the AFL, a trade unionist himself, was arrested during the Gainers strike and was a member of the NDP. The officer of the AFL, was a member of the executive council, and had been elected for a second time in a high position, and was a member of the CPC. Thus, the interviewees represented the main political forces that, at the present time, have a political initiative in the AFL.

The parts of the interviews which had a high degree of specificity, pertaining to the specific activities of their involvement, have already been used and incorporated in earlier sections of this thesis. What is of concern in this section, is their overall views, ideas, feelings and experiences, as well as, the knowledge they gained, about the present stage of the

labour movement in Alberta.

The different aspects of the interviews are reported according to the nature of their content, on the basis of five broad and tentative headings.

The first one addresses questions about their overall understanding of the sociohistorical context, - the most important events that happened in the last 10 years; on the impact that certain events had upon labour and society; and finally, on the impact that society has upon labour.

The second one had to do with the content of the AFL, and labour movement culture. Here, questions were asked about the relation between the structural organization of the AFL and the labour movement, the political ideologies that emerged within them, and finally the particular activities that the AFL initiated in the last six years.

The third one was concerned with the form of the AFL during the last 6 years. The questions were directed towards the production of information about the importance of militancy, unity and solidarity, within the AFL, its affiliates and the larger community. Further, the significance of the selection and initiation of particular activities or programs of action for the AFL, were also discussed.

The fourth had to do with the personal profiles and brief autobiographies of the interviewees. That was done in order to see what were some of the causes of their involvement in the labour movement.

Finally, the fifth one was about their visions for the future of the labour movement and the AFL, of the political forces involved in it, and of Canadian society at large.

During the presentation of these interviews, there might be some overlapping of information, but this was expected. However, this format of presentation was used in order to emphasize the possible contradictions within the social and class consciousness of the interviewees. Such contradictions are apparent when tensions between contradicting and opposing sets of categories were utilized by the interviewer. That means - general-specific, societal-personal, historical-situational, and ideological-practical categories.

Further, and in order to tolerate the possible differences in opinion among the interviewees, the format of presentation was constructed in such a way, that it would appear as a dialogue between three people. In any case the sequence of presentation is from the more concrete to the more general. In the end, the interviews were edited and summarized in order to become presentable according to format. However, the content and the arguments have not been changed.

Following is a list of the tentative questions for the unstructured interviews:

1. What do you know about the history of AFl and of the activity in which you were personally involved?

2. How was the activity that you were involved in, structurally organized both within itself, as well as in relation to the AFL?

3. What kinds of political ideologies and practices emerged and developed, within the particular activity in which you were involved, and how significant were they for the participants' and for the AFL's overall profile?

4. What was the content and form of the interpersonal and intersubjective relationships and communications, between and within the participants and the officers of the AFL, that emerged developed during the period of your participation?

5. Why and under what circumstances did you develop an interest in the labour movement and the AFL?; and how and in what capacity were you introduced to that particular activity?; how do you evaluate your over all involvement and the future development of the AFL?

Context.

Volunteer (35 years old).

I can only talk on the basis of my experience with unemployment and with my union (Building Trades). The most important thing of the 1980's, I think, was the spontaneous reaction of the people to the unemployment crisis. The formation of the committee for the unemployed indicates that people from all sorts of social, economic, political, and educational

background appeared to be concerned with the crisis, and had started to ask what can be done.

The unions and especially the one I know, Building Trades, became very cynical about the crisis and did not show any concern for the unemployed members. Something had to be done. In the end however, political inexperience, careerism, and opportunism did not allow the development of an organization for the unemployed. The example of the British Columbia's UACs was rather outdated, (1930's practices), and the UACs in Alberta were also a failure.

The crisis also gave the opportunity to the communists to come out of their closet, and to try to establish relations with the workers. At the same time the "wait and see" role of the NDP became more clear along with its electoral policies. Through the funding of the UAC program the government expressed once more its paternalism. At the same time, the political difference between the Federal and the Provincial government was once more demonstrated. Only in the context of personal sufferring, the workers began to question the social system. But alternative political parties did not know how to organize and direct the workers to political action.

The AFL on the other hand, was cut off from the rank and file membership of the unions. Along with the left political parties which were too bureaucratic and run by intellectual workers, that scared away the workers from joining.

Staff Member of the AFL (38 years old).

Some of the most important things that happened in the last six years, are, the collapse of the economy in Alberta and in Canada, the decline in membership of the unions, and at the same time the increase in their militancy, the withdrawal of Building Trades from the CLC, the Gainers strike, and change in the leadership of the AFL.

The AFL in the 1970's had a chance to organize the nurses in its lines, but instead its leadership went fishing. Also the teachers have remained out of the Federation. Other important events were the introduction of a number of Bills by the Federal and the Provincial government, by which the rights of labour were severely restricted. At the same time the

realization of the labour movement that the labour act in Alberta is in a sense anti-labour. In the 1970's the labour movement was able to recover somehow from the era of McCarthism. Since 1983 especially in Alberta, this recovery took a more prominent form, with the election of a militant leadership. Rightist efforts to destroy this leadership fell flat.

Officer of the AFL.

Before 1983 the AFl was a "do-nothing Federation". The leadership was following a business union approach and the membership did not see the AFL as a vehicle for achieving their goals. Overall, the AFL was operating in isolation from the community. It never proposed any fundamental changes that would have created some sort of controversy. Since 1982, "the bloom fell from the rose" in Alberta.. The Building Trades left the CLC, oppressive legislation for human and labour rights was introduced, and militancy emerged in the unions and the workers. For now there were no ways for achieving settlement with substantial increases, as they had been used to have for a long time. Now they had to fight hard just to keep their jobs and the level of wages. Strikes that were not prepared well failed to produce changes, and workers were restricted in their right to strike with "back to work" legislation.

Since 1983 the AFL has changed dramatically. It achieved to unite the labour movement to a considerable degree. At the same time it was able to mobilize and broaden its activities, by forming coalitions with the social movement in general. The catch words for the Federation and the labour movement, as it stands now, is "mobilization" and "fight back".

Content.

Volunteer.

In the case of the Edmonton UAC, the AFL had not any organizational idea of how the centre should be run, and for what purposes. Formal control was only in papers, but actual control did not exist. The communists who had most of the internal control in the centre, had not any clear understanding about the centers, or how to approach the workers. Division on the basis of personal and political differences between them resulted in a

deterioration of the centre. The NDP did not get involved in any sense, being afraid of failure, where spontaneous elements, anarchists and a number of people from the single men's hostels, were pushing for an organization. These people, when they get the responsibility of a task, develop feelings of worth and they drasticallychange their characters.

Organized anarchists outside the UAC, collaborated with officers from the Salvation Army in order to attack the AFL. In terms of the activities, a lot of effort was placed in controlling eccentric attitudes, but in the end a sense of accomplishment and collective feelings emerged among the volunteers. But even in terms of the activities, there was not any concrete plan to work on. The centre at the end, did not capture the imagination of the workers, basically due to the fact that their spontaneity was curtailed by the coordinators who would prefer a strict controllable organization, in which they would be the big fish, instead of a broad democratic organization where they would be a small fish.

The workers are not afraid of the system and they are ready to fight it when they would be pressured. What they are afraid of is bureaucracy. The most effective way for anti-Soviet and anti-communist propaganda of the bourgeoisie to attack socialist countries, is on the basis that they are bureaucratic.

Unity and solidarity among working people is the result of their relation in the production line, where they depend on each other. When I lay bricks, I depend on my fellow worker to assist me and bring me the materials. That is when discussion about family, friends and society develops natural. Thus, the political unity and solidarity cannot develop on the basis of opinion, but on the basis of practical activities to solve common problems. Opinions divide people. The major problem in the UAC was that the left did not put its ideas and theory in praxis. That shows how weak they were ideologically. Instead, they fall in the trap of bourgeois individual development, career, and achievement. You cannot built a movement like this.

Staff Member of the AFL.

There is a real contradiction in the structural organization of the labour movement in Canada: a tendency towards absolute autonomy of the locals from the central bodies, and

almost mythical guarding of their membership lists, versus a tendency towards centralized descision making, and accountability of officers, unions, and affiliates. This imposes a real problem when an umbrella body like the AFL tries to mobilize the labour movement, for it has no access to the rank and file of its affiliated unions

In terms of political ideology, before 1983, nothing was really happening. The leadership of the AFL did not really try to reach beyond the labour movement. It was mostly concerned with economic issues and at the same time it was caught in the ideology of tripartism and class-colaboration. In 1983 the membership rejected the efforts for nominations for leadership positions of right-wing NDP elements, and voted for a change. The new AFL leadership's class analysis and stance has been opposed by the AUPE leadership. This latter union is the largest in Alberta. And it has high salaries and the worst labour record. As a matter of fact in 1986 the AUPE leadership was able to get rid of 18 left wingers from its staff. In the AFL programs, pushed by the president of the AFL, there was a careful criticism by the NDP representatives. But no open confrontation has taken place. With the new developments in the labour movement, the communists for the first time, after 1930, have a chance to do something. The future will show if class analysis will be incorporated in the labour movement.

Political education does not exist in the AFL. CLC's programs, are trade unionist and technical. In terms of the activities of the UACs, they were largely a failure. They became too bureaucratic. Solidarity Alberta was not so successful after all. The AUPE had sabotaged it and had not given to it enough funds. But also the Soliarity Alberta, and the UACs were largely modeled after the BC experience. Alberta labour, in fact, needs a culture of its own.

In the Gainers strike, from the political parties, only the communists were present at all times. To a considerable degree they have managed to overcome the anti-communism of the Gainer workers, and be accepted by them. The NDP members did not show up in the picket line. In fact, the NDP does not do well with workers. They simply tolerate it , for no other political alternative exists for them in the present.

Overall, the AFL represents the working class on broader basis than organization. This is reflected in the policies and actions of the AFL, in which demands are made for the benefit of all people.

Officer of the AFL.

In 1982 the Building trades left the Federation because they did not agree with the political initiative of the CLC (affiliation with the NDP, anti NATO, anti NORAD stance, support of the Peace movement, critique and action against the Liberal and Conservative governments, anti imperialist and anti USA stance, on an increasing base). This was an action that was initiated by the International leadership of the Building Trades, with the Canadian leadership, followed with no consultation or vote by their membership. It was done basically because the Canadian leadership relied on their appointment from the International leadership. However, not all the unions and the locals wanted to move out, but they were forced. With them the AFL keeps good contact and relations and common activities; on that agenda there is the issue of the "Nationalization of the Building Trades" and the other International unions in the country. What, however, the International unions claim as the reason of their withdrawal is, that due to the structure of the CLC they were under-represented. To that argument there is a degree of merit. For example, there was in AFL, a Public Sector Council, formed on nationalist base. The International and especially the Building Trades, were very conservative and hooked into tripartism, and had politically stagnated the labour movement. But to split the federation and the CLC was not the way to go.

On the other hand, the Building trades, because they were losing in policy, had proposed "block voting", and they were themselves exercising it. With block voting, a few delegates from the Internationals would be able to cast the votes for thousands of workers who would not participate in the convention, where the public sector unions with many delegates would only have one vote each. I still remember the days in the convention of the CLC, in the AFL or the BCFL, where the leader of the Internationals would sit at a table and the delegates from these unions would vote according to how he voted. The withdrawal of the

Building Trades from the CLC and the AFL, even though it weakened the influence of organized labour, on the other hand, strengthened it politically. For with these unions a considerable degree of conservatism moved out.

The changes in the leadership of the AFL in 1983, were the result of membership reaction against the behind-their-backs-cooking initiated by the AUPE, in order to secure further its leadership position within the AFL. The AUPE had supported as a "surogate" candidate for president, a member of the CUPE, without previous consultation with the union. It had also forced the previous president of the Federation to run in 1983 for the position of the secretary-treasurer. That move was perceived as an effort to "create" a leadership based on power and influence and not in positions.

The times, however, had passed and the membership which had become more militant, voted for a leadership that would be able to carry on the mandate. In the previous three conventions similar efforts by the AUPE had also been defeated. But this union had many alternatives till then, not in 1983 though. The CUPE united solidly behind their candidate who was elected as president, where the AUPE split.

In terms of the political affiliation of the AFL with the NDP, and as far as concerns the militancy of many labour leaders, who are also members of the same party, there are a few things that should be kept in mind. First, this affiliation is based on a bureaucratic level, and therefore, the rank and file, even though a considerable part of it supports this party, in considerable do not participate in its programs and activities. As a result the so called militance of the labour movement, to a large degree, is still superficial. Second, with the election of communists in the AFL, the NDP does not have that much imput into the initiatives of the AFL, nevertheless, they supported and they have not, so far, "red baited" the communists.

Third, the AFL has changed, from simply supporting the NDP to a "critical" support of this party, on the line that this party should support the AFL's policies and not vice-versa. This is especially true with the AFL initiative for broad mobilization of all social forces and groups beyond the trade union movement.

Fourth, a consistent criticism within the AFL and the CLC has emerged, about their affiliation with the NDP, on both conservative and progressive grounds. That is, that we are unionists and we should not support any party, and that trade unionists should be open to other political forces in the left.

In terms of the relation between communists and the NDP, there are also a few things to be considered. In the AFL at the present, the political spectrum of the officers varies from communists to left, to center and right NDP. As long as the left, including the communists, are weak in the labour movement, the NDP tends to reject their critical support; whenever they appear strong, the NDP tends to cooperate and unite. As the Action Caucus meeting has shown, in which even broader political ideologies are represented, on question of issues, the initiative of the left for political action on issues, unites.

On the question of politicalization and mobilization of the rank and file, and here I do not advocate a "rank and filism" as being opposed to the leadership, the affiliation with the NDP, the structural organization (relative autonomy of the locals), of the CLC, and the lack of political education, create many problems.

The AFL has initiated the development of committees, groups and caucuses, on the shop-floor level with considerable success. It has also initiated a process of reactivation of the DLCs. There is a long way to go in terms of the political education of the AFL. In 1983 the AFL opposed the trade unionistic approach to education by the CLC, and has initiated through the University of Alberta, and Athabasca University a new program, with a political and radical content. Also the AFL has initiated conferences, for example the one on human rights, in which the AFL was the first one to criticise the charter as placing individual rights against the collective rights of labour and the people.

In the 1985 Economic Conference, the AFL expanded its political education perspective beyond the collective bargaining to all kinds of economic, political, and social issues. The events in 1986 have stopped these developments, but they will be carried on.

However, as shown by the experience of the Public Sector unions organized from the bottom up, as opposed to the International unions, which were organized from

top-to-bottom, when the political initiative comes from the base of the labour movement, the outcome is more militancy, radicalism, and mobilization. That is what the AFL is trying to do. Further, efforts have been made for unions to merge with each industry, and to appear more united. The AFL overall represents not only its members but all the people who have been exploited, dominated, and oppressed by the system. The policies and the action of the Federation testify to that. Both the NDP and the communists within the AFL, are jointly working together as "cooperative protagonists".

Form.

Volunteer.

The development of the Committee for the Unemployed, the activation of people in the UAC, and the tendency to create an organization for the unemployed, provide evidence that the workers and the people of Alberta have started to question the system and to become mobilized in a more radical and militant way. What is in effect missing at the time, is a political party, that would be able to communicate and relate to the workers, and be run by workers, instead of bureaucrats and intellectuals. The elements of spontaneity should work together with the elements of consciousness, so that more possibilities would open up for more political action that will lead to revolution.

In terms of the organization of the unemployed, as is illustrated by the success of the Dandelions, it should become an initiative of the local unions. The Dandelions emerged after the members of the Building trades pressured their leadership to take such an action. It is also apparent that the labour movement and the left cannot rely on government funds. Especially when these funds are donated to them and not taken by them, as a result of pressure and action. That is what happens when things start up and the strength is not there. That is why even the communists had to take money from the government to build their library. You simply cannot do that.

Staff Member of the AFL.

The Gainers strike should be the future example for the labour movement, the AFL and the political parties of the left how things should be done and developed. Everything in it was Albertan. Its dynamism, its militancy, spontaneity, lack of organization and preparation. We shall learn this lesson and analyse it from a class perspective. These qualities are also reflected in the make-up of the AFL at the present. The AFL is the most avant-guard Federation in N.America in policies and in leadership, but we have organizational problems. This is what we should overcome.

Officer of the AFL.

Since 1983, the AFL has changed considerably but it has also changed within these three last years. The UAC and the Gainers strike show exactly this. There were two different approaches to the question of mobilization. For the UAC, the Federation had operated on funds from the government. The AFL had applied for these funds before 1983, and at the end it was trapped in the government's paternalism. In the Gainers strike the AFL was able to support it from funds coming from within the labour movement. In the end it was an important success, for labour, as well as the larger community, were mobilized. Solidarity Alberta proved its strength in that strike.

Unity, solidarity, coalitions and fronts of labour and the social movements, is the way to go, and the AFL is building on it at the present. It has become obvious to many unions by now, that the collective bargaining process should take a different meaning. The initiative for a strike should be with labour. The AFL can only be the leading force in this process, for now a strike needs preparation, broad mobilization and careful selection of strategies and tactics. This is in order to be able to defend and destroy the hidden agenda of the multinationals, transnationals and the governments that ascribe to neo-conservatism.

The other important issue, which the AFL is very sensitive about, is the further representation of women trade unionists in the leadership of the labour movement. The Affirmative Action program implemented in 1985, was an organizational measure for that goal. The nature of the question however, is political ideological, and that is the way it should be advanced. The sisters in the AFL have been proved not only as women activists,

but also as trade unionist leaders, and have been involved in all issues and aspects of the Federation. The AFL, as its policy, opposes bourgeois feminism that divides men and women, and disregards the importance of the social system. More than anybody else the women labour leaders have worked hard for such a division not to occur. But it needs a special and stronger effort by all the workers to achieve total equality, at least within the labour movement. This is a primary item in the AFL's agenda.

The question of Internationalism is also a priority for the AFL. The era of McCarthism and the constant propaganda of the media since then, has installed in the consciousness of the workers many features that are against their collective interests. Still many workers, even though this has changed considerably in the last years, do not differentiate between fascism and communism. Also they cannot understand the political significance of the liberation and revolutionary movements in the third world countries. However, they have consistently supported all the progressive initiatives of the socialist countries, especially on the question of Peace, and they have also supported the movement in the third world (financially). But they still contradict themselves in many issues. That is where more political education is needed.

The AFL is one of the most Internationalistic Federations in the country, but there is a long way to go still. In that context, the AFL has opposed "imported" bourgeois policies and ideologies about the labour process, such as the "right to work", "quality of life programs", "industrial democracy and workers participation". All these policies are targeting against trade unionism, and are used in order to divide the workers, or to integrate them in the capitalist system. They are very dangerous developments for labour.

Profile.

Volunteer.

I am a construction worker, unemployed, I come from a working class native background. My family, mostly by tradition and the belief in communitarian values, was anti-bourgeois and anti-capitalist, but they were not involved in politics. I quit school

because of discrimination and prejudice from the teachers against me. My interests in politics is the result of the personal anguish and destruction of my expectations because of the crisis in the 1980's. Everything has changed for me since then. Before, I thought that by listening to the TV, I would be informed about everything. I had become "North Americanized". I became angry when I realized how much isolated and alone I have been all these years. Now that I really needed help, no one was around to offer it to me. I decided to do something about it myself, and that's how I got involved.

After some political "shopping" I visited the office of the communist party in 1982, and they send me to the meeting of the unemployed. But later I became completely disenchanted with that party, because they did not understand that the workers need fast action, something to be done right now. They could not deliver. My involvement in the labour movement, gave me pride and self-worthiness. I was fighting the bourgeoisie, and I was not alone. To be involved politically for me, is to integrate the reality that you are in with the reality you want to create. In the end class consciousness strengthness your personality.

Staff Member of the AFL.

I come from a typical prairie family, populist and socialist by conviction. I have worked in many industries, including the old Swifts (now Gainers) plant. I also have several years of post secondary education. During my years in the university I got involved in the movement of the 1960's and early 1970's, opposing the Vietnam war and supporting peace. The NDP for me was the only alternative, but I have been very critical of this party because it does not have any class analysis. I got involved in the trade union movement, through the AUPE but soon I found myself almost kicked out of it, because of political ideological differences. The AFL for me is the only political organization that I can work for at the present.

Officer of the AFL.

I come from a progressive family. My grand parents were from Sweden, and had brought with them the social democratic ideology from their home country. My parents were

also very progressive, who by living in a farm had experienced the depression and had transmitted their political thinking and frustrations to me. The capitalist system was always in question for me. This tendency led me to join the communist party of Canada, from which I have developed a better and deeper understanding about capitalism, and what it does to the working class. I have a long trade unionist participation and experience, and I have participated in all of its levels, and I have learned the hard way, that you cannot be either impatient nor move faster than the collective will of the workers.

My most important concerns about the labour movement are the question of unity and of mobilization, on political grounds. I am also deeply concerned about the question of peace and the existence of social, economic, and political discrimination that still exist in this country.

As an officer of the AFL, the experiences and the knowledge gained in the trade union movement, and by my involvement in the Communist party, have helped me to contribute to the unity of the Federation and in its broader political and social mobilization and activation. To that I have found in the AFL, similar thinking officers and trade unionists whose numbers are constantly increasing.

Future Visions.

Volunteer.

For the future, I would like to see the labour movement get more politically involved to stop the "civil war" in Canada, that is still conducted by white and native capitalists, against the native people of Canada. For that, as well as for any other social change, a real change in the trade union movement should take place. At the present time union meetings are not attended by more than 10% of the membership. Workers must get involved. The Gainers strike shows a change towards this direction. I would also like to see the NDP and especially the CPC change and to come closer to the workers, and listen to them. I also want to see these parties to work together. For now I think these are enough.

In the early meetings of the Committee for the unemployed, we had put three basic goals for our movement and for the labour and the people's movement as a whole: a) full employment, b) meaningful employment, and c) guaranteed by the state, to all citizens. These demands are still main items in the political agenda for the future.

Staff Member of the AFL.

We need first of all to change the Alberta labour laws, and we should not allow another 1950's and another Hal Bank's to happen to Canada. For that we need to educate the left about class, and we also need to present all social sciences to the trade union movement, from a labour perspective. The AFL, in 1987 will be in a cross road. Either it will continue towards the left or back down. That will largely depend upon whether the present leadership will be elected or not for another term with large majority.

The free-trade issue will further polarize the country on a class base, and confrontation will become more open. At the same time the economy will deteriorate as capital export will be intensified. For that Alberta will need to become more militant just like in the 1930's. The present leadership in the AFL will have an important role to play. The main problem is that the economy in the province is based on oil and services: with oil to be capital and not labour intensive and with services, having too many white collar workers. The new militancy would have to take under consideration these dynamics. Finally, it seems that in a ten year period there is a possibility to see the CPC resurrection in the province and in Canada, if we have not then become an integral part to American imperialism.

Officer of the AFL.

For the future I would like to see a world free from the threat of a nuclear war, and nuclear holocaust. I would also like to see Canada free from foreign control, especially from USA exploitation, domination and oppression. I would like to see this great country to be able to use its resources for its people, and to further develop, by opening its doors to the people of the world.

The young people in this country have a tremendous fight in front of them in order to save it. Most of all we have to give to the native people the right of their own land. Besides

the difficulties, the present social political developments in labour and society, tell me that no matter what we will go through, "we shall overcome". For that I work.

Comments.

For the protagonists within which the political initiative in the Federation lies, but also for the many individual trade unionists in the AFL, the defense of the right to exist goes hand in hand with the right to progress. To that they do not only express the content of labour, but also of a wide range of forces that constitute the social movement in Alberta. As a result of the complexity of their interrelations, and their relations with the broader movement, they constantly try to re-adapt to their policies and actions, on the basis of their experience and knowledge that they have gained throughout.

In the final analysis the process of adaptation constitutes a general tendency, most of the time spontaneous and sometimes conscious, of a total rejection of the system of social relations as a whole.

In their overall consideration, the way that these tendencies are manifested, not only on the individual but on the collective level, have a dialectical essence, which depends upon two general processes. First, on the impact that the political ideology of the bourgeois society and of socialism, have upon the social personality of the workers, and second, upon the degree of rupture between these two political ideologies, that exist (or not), in their cultural pattern.

With these remarks we will depart into the theoretical discussion, on the basis of the case study, about the culture of the AFL and its sociohistorical significance.

B. FINAL REMARKS.

As a general observation about the culture of the AFL it can be said that the Gainers strike is the event which gave meaning and substance to the Federation as a representative working class organization. The strike turned into a classical case of class war with labour and community to opposse, antagonize and battle the company, the state and the government.

The more united the one camp was appearing the more splits emerged in the other and the more costly compromises had to be achieved in order to secure their unity.

In this strike once more it became clear the damage that the "international-American" affiliation of Canadian workers does to them, as well as to the radicalization of their movement. At the same time the strike shows that there is not any obstacle or fetter strong enough to prevent the workers from revolting, given adequate time and proper circumstances.

The strike is perhaps one more testimony of the historical paradox which needs the symbolic manifestation of a qualitative change in the processes of social development to take place, on the one hand, with an unexpected intensity and rigour that astonish both the actors and the audience; and on the other hand to be both premature and behind the actual necessities of its times. All these trends in fact synthesize the tragic essence of historical development and dramatize the actions of the participants.

What then appeared as chance was in fact the necessary outcome of what had been building up for a period of time. And if it happened at Gainers this again is a manifestation of how the general finds its dialectical expression in the particular at critical nodal points of history. The latter has all the necessary qualities in order to become the expression of an era.

The same holds true for the participants and their leaders. Their political and ideological make-up could only assist them within limits. They were caught by surprise despite the fact that they had prepared themselves for such key events. The logic of history appeared greater than any individual comprehension of it. They could only express what was already happening by their own collective praxis. And yet the AFL leadership proved to be in the most advanced position compared to all the other protagonists despite, the limitations that the AFL's position and make-up had forced upon it. Thus, it reflected the demands and necessities of the time and was able to transcend a strike that became a political challenge of the social order.

Within this process the inherent contradiction of the system manifested itself more clearly than ever. On the one side were the workers who struck for adequate humans living conditions. On the other side was a capitalist who appropriates their production and is able

to afford, during the strike, expensive vacations, along with an athlete-symbol of what the system represents, who ignored where his wealth is coming from. All these operated under the auspices of an allegdly "philanthropic" government and a "Big-Brother-State" who did not once fail to show whose side they were with.

This contradiction had been further intensified by the fact that the workers, their organizations and sectors of the community had experienced a unity and solidarity with each other antithetical and antagonistic to the competitive and individualistic nature of the culture of civil society. Perhaps that is why when a worker was asked by a CBC interviewer, on the first anniversary of the strike - "What difference did the strike make for you?", she said: "We were all together."

The significance of this statement for the essence of human culture is that it brings in the forefront the question of a possible emancipatory appropriation of the collective past, transcended into a future in which humanity will be able to write its own history for everyone and not for and by one small and priviledged part of it.

The lessons of the Gainers strike and of the changing nature of the AFL's culture, in order to become more sociologically meaningful, need to be observed within the new totality of social dynamics which at the present is in the process of formation. From that, broader questions and generalizations about the Alberta working class culture might become a focus for future researchers.

Context.

Canada, at the present time may be experiencing a dramatic shift in its economic and political life, a "rebuilding" of the nation on the basis of the implementation of the whole free-trade package. Thus, constitutional changes are implemented in order to "equalize" the national make-up of the country and allow a credible appearance in front of the international financial policy makers, so that they will find the country stable and secure enough for their future investments.

History in fact repeats itself within the new and qualitativly different context. As in the case of the emergence of the Confederation, the "new" confederation, which Quebec joins is based on the same rationale:

> "Confederation itself was produced by the desire to facilitate capital accumulation by guaranteeing loans from London to build the railways" (Panitch, 1979:14).

In the present case the loans are needed to rebuild the entire economy on the basis of the free-trade "package". Along with the changes in the constitution, the taxation system is also rebuilt by simplifying it and at the same time increasing its revenue base (sales tax, taxation of small and middle size businesses) and simultaneously providing "exceptions" to every big monopoly consortium.The whole process is accompanied by a tendency towards the privatization of the industries and the deregulation of the markets.

It is interesting, at this point, that the present public discussion and presentations on the free trade talks between Canada and U.S.A., have concentrated on secondary issues such as the cultural industry or the AUTO-pact, that have attracted most of the public's attention where the issues of capital investment and the free flow of capital have only barely been mentioned. An exception, however, is the issue of the takeover of Dome Petroleum by the American international oil monopoly, Amoco. Through this deal if it is carried out the U.S., oil monopoly giant will capture the largest "land claims" for oil exploration, an item which for forty years American oil policies have struggled to achieve. (Shaffer, 1983:213-246)

In relation to these processes, is the effort to reduce the national deficit of Canada and to control overproduction by means of controlling inflation, through cuts in social services, and of loans and grants which do not have a direct and immediate impact on profit maximazation; and by finally increasing the interest rates and unemployment levels. Thus, the Canadian dollar would gain more value and become more competitive.

As far as concerns the attitudes of the monopoly institutions to the labour and social movements here, there are two trends which are taking place. On the one hand, is the need to control overproduction and lowering wages so commodities will become cheaper and more competitive. Thus, ruling bourgeois circles in Canada are willing to tolerate a high degree of strike activity and as a matter of fact, as the recent postal strike shows most clearly, to

provoke this kind of labour response.

On the other hand, the possibility of having the labour and social movements running out of control (along with the perpetuation of the strikes) has caused the legal system and state as a whole to launch an attack against striking workers. Simultaneously, the Charter of Rights is used to protect individual rights at the expense of the collective rights of the workers. Thus, protection is offered to strike breakers and to individual workers who for one or another reason have challenged the status of the unions, while strikes have been proclaimed not covered by the constitution. Further, a civic implementation of the "War Measures Act" as part of the legal system has been discussed, which is aimed at giving the government and the states powers by which in cases of extreme confrontation and class struggle, they would have the right to declare the province or even the country to an equivalent of a "siege" that third world and developing countries have long before repeatedly experienced.

Form.

The labour movement within the free trade context (and in its present trde unionistic and social democratic character) seems to be in a "Catch-22" situation. If it will support the free trade initiative, at least its organized part in trade unions, would propably be benefitted to some extent, and for a short period of time, by the capitalist economic growth of Canada at the expense of the rest of the population and of the people in the dependent countries. In the long-run, however, the organized labour movement is about to experience a more serious challenge to its own existence, if it is to adopt such a policy. That is because it will find itself in social isolation and will become an easy target for the attack of Capital which in the future will further demand the removal of the obstacles (organized labour always has been one of the most important) to its expansion and growth.

On the other hand, if it is to oppose free trade, as it is actually doing at the present, without having any clear alternative direction to what the society as a whole might become, in a fractionated manner,the labour movement is bound to find itself captured within the traps of the "welfare" society, as a tail to liberal and social democratic reformist policies. These

latter, however, have been proven historically incompatible with the needs of capitalist development at the present stage. After all they have became the grounds for the free trade initiative. In this second case, therefore, the labour movement in its present form will support an historical anachronism which again, in the long-run will be against it.

It is not surprising, therefore, that an increasingly developing discontent has emerged within the organized labour movement with the policies of the NDP, without yet challenging it in any serious political manner. The NDP due to its contradictory social base (along with the organized labour movement including farmers, intellectuals, small businesses and in general middle classes, which from their own particular position support or oppose free trade for different reasons), has not been able to develop a "clear-cut" position with regards to the "package" of free trade as a whole. Thus, while it opposes the free trade initiative verbally, in reality the NDP supports many of the more important items that are included in its agenda: constitutional changes, taxation changes, changes in the legal system, while it opposes particular issues within these areas, which have already attracted public opinion and have already been opposed by a wide range of social forces. In its overall consideration the NDP's position vis-a-vis the free trade question remains contradictory and anachronistic, and while in appearance it seems opposing, in essence the NDP is supportive with certain reservations in terms of its implementations.

Content.

The AFL's culture to a large extent reflects the concerns of organized labour with the possibilities of what the capitalist future of Canada has in stock for them. At the same time, it shows a developing tendency towards a "new-unionism" and a political expression that seems to go beyond the different forms of capitalist society. Whether these tendencies will find a social base of wide support and of a political organizational expression is a function of the ability of the working class as a whole to transcend its experience within capitalism, from a state of resistence to capitalistic expansionism into a state of class conscious and antagonistic opposition to it.

The history of the working class culture as reflected in the context of the AFL has a unique quality if compared with that of the working class as a whole. In it the political and ideological is more intensly manifested along with the contradictions that the individual members experience in their everyday life in civil society.

Thus, the political and the ideological elements within the organizational structure of the AFL in the issues that the working class experiences in its everyday life, manifests the relation of the collective with the individual class consciousness in a higher level of realization. In that sense, the AFL's culture appears as a dialectic relation of the unity and contradiction between the mode of life that the working class is experiencing in civil society and the mode of struggle which follows on both the collective and the individual level. Within the historical development of the AFL, culture the manifestation of the "privatized" worker as opposed to the "politicalized" one, takes altogether a different praxial and symbolic meaning. The AFL as a political expression of the organized working class, confronts on the one hand the cultural processes of civil society as a whole; on the other hand appears as an integral part of that development.

> "The formula of de-politicization is only the mirror image of the politicisation of the private" (Ludtke, 1982: 39).

The reactionary, legitimizing, critical and negating modes of culture manifest the immediate experience of the organized working class living within the context of the civil society. As such, they are in fact amalgamated both within the particular class contexts, as well as, by the totality of civil society, and as such do not necessarily distinguish the working class from any other class. Thus, the mode of life and the mode of struggle of the organized worker in the AFL expressed at the individual and collective level within the Federation, have been seen to fluctuate in their cultural crystalization, as the latter is reflected in the different stages of its development.

The important changes which occured, however, in the culture of the AFL during the 1980's brings the present discussion to the following question:

> "How can a kind of politics [revolutionary] be possible where the actions and wishes of its agencies and recipients are not to be reduced to an either/or of readiness for action or complacency?" (Ludtke, ibid: 52).

After all, as Ludtke, has argued this kind of revolutionary politics presupposes both "collective action and the articulation of individual needs" which have to be "bound together." (ibid:52)

Praxis.

The collective emancipatory appropriation of the working class historical and cultural past within the AFL, in its practical realization of the present and future, seems to be taking place in two distinct forms: As a mechanical implementation of remembered policies and actions which proved to be failures and set backs (UAC); and as dialectical implementation of remembered practices in which the elements of failures have been overcome, and consequently forgotten by giving to those practices the distinct qualities of a contemporary mode of appearance (consecutive re-election of communists, broad social-political strike activity, direct political practice). In these instances, the outcome, to some extent is a successful presentation of an alternative working class culture first of all in relation to its historical self, and in consequence to the civil society as a whole.

The politicalization, therefore, of the overall mode of praxis of a politically privatized worker, negates the latter altogether and brings elements of the working class and especially the AFL to the level in which it represents the future of the society as a whole. On the basis, therefore, of the AFL's latent revolutionary culture and consciousness, it can be observed that the possibility of the universalization of this trend, in the final analysis will depend upon the ability of the federation to become consistantly more political, militant, and radical, and at the same to find a broader political and organizational expression of its revolutionazing culture.

These possibilities have been shown in the Gainers strike, which changed dramatically the way that collective bargaining could be conducted in Canada from now on. In the aftermath of the Gainers strike, the workers discottent with the result was one of the most significant manifestations of the political, ideological and organizational vacuum, for the working class, that at the present exist in Alberta and in Canada. It seems, though, that this

vacuum testifies to the need for the development of a broader political and organizational force which will be able to express consistently the class interests of a spontaneously revolting "new-worker".

Thus, the trade union movement as a result of its contradictory cultural location with the civil society of advanced capitalism appropriates its collective past on the basis of an also contradictory mode of praxis: negating and legitimizing. In return, this mode of praxis is generated as a result of a direct and dialectical political intervention of collective practices by the participants in the AFL. At the present, however, these emancipatory and negating collective practices of the organized working class have found their limited expression in a more class conscious leadership, and a more politically committed membership.

Future.

The question of whether these new emerging tendencies and processes in the AFL, (perceived as expressing not only a "new-unionism" but also a new working class culture - as the universal culture of a new Canadian society), are about to have any significant political and ideological as well as organizational concrete result, remains to be seen.

The fact is that the AFL and the labour movement in Alberta have become part of the "avant-guard" in the emancipatory transformation of Canadian society. The recent cultural development of the AFL has demonstrated that, the question about, the political strength of the left is more related to the political will of the membership and the leadership of the Federation to become actively involved in the creation of their social future, rather than with a the increase in the numbers of organized workers. The latter can have a significant impact upon the formation of a class conscious working class culture, as long as, the former is present.

In the overall considerations, however, the analysis of the AFL culture might be perceived to reflect the new trend in human historical development as a whole mostly concerned with the preservation and propagation of peace on the planet. Thus, its cultural affinities appear to transcend the geographical boundaries of Alberta and Canada, in order to

be recognized in the cultures of the working classes of other countries as well. The painstaking process of the slow, repetitious and fluctuating nature of the new cultural developments can be perceived as deep recognition (conscious or unconscious) by the international working class of the danger that the sudden and uncalculated changes in the present international order may create for the existence of humanity as a whole. As a matter of fact, the present working class cultural development, reflected in the increased level of participation of Labour in the Peace movements, is presenting a deep concern about the survival and development not only of the class in itself, but of humanity as a whole.

It would appear therefore, as a historical paradox if the dictum of the scientist of the atomic era, Einstein, (who proposed the need of a qualitatively different kind of thinking for humanity, in which the war cannot anymore be considered as a continuation of politics) finds its realization in the political and ideological praxis of the revolutionary culture of the working class. For politics contacted and defined in the sense, which has prevailed before the threat of the nuclear holocaust, within the new context would mostly signify not only an end of the working class in its physical and social appearance, but also an end to humanity as a whole.

The working class culture therefore, has in fact only one alternative direction for its survival and development, the survival and development of humanity as a whole, without meaning necessarily any restriction on its possible revolutionary quality. As a matter of fact, the preservation and victory of peace might itself have the most revolutionary dimension for working class culture.

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X. APPENDIX A.

A. A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE AFL s RESOLUTIONS FOR THE 1979-1986 PERIOD.

This content analysis of the resolutions of the AFL covers a period of eight years, 1979-1986. It includes a total number of 1.176 categorized and classified resolutions that were proposed in the annual convention of the AFL.

Of the 1.176 resolutions, 1.070 met with concurrence, whereas 106 met with no concurrence. One of the factors that has contributed to the relatively high number of resolutions, was the fact that many of the proposed resolutions constituted of a number of sub-resolutions that needed to be dealt with separately. Further, and in most cases, these sub-resolutions referred to different subject matters, and a need for a different "kind" of classification and categorization was prominent.

Resolutions were categorized on the basis of their implied praxial and symbolic content. There were four categories representing the possible cultural "nodes" in the culture of the AFL: Negation, Critique, Legitimation, Reaction. Further, these categories were perceived as reflecting a particular form of dialectical relationship involving the AFL, the labour movement, and the society as a whole. By synchronic we refer to the overall consideration of the performance of the four categories, and the five sets of groups, for the entire eight year period. By diachronic we refer to the year by year consideration of the resolutions. For the present discussion emphasis is based upon the points where elements of continuity-discontinuity, advancement-setback, are evident.

Resolutions categorized under Negation, were perceived as a tendency towards the qualitative emancipation of the social system of relations within labour and within society, through revolt. Those that were categorised under Critique, were perceived to imply a tendency towards the qualitative change of the system of social relations, within labour and within society, through reforms. Resolutions categorised under Legitimation, were perceived to imply a tendency towards the qualitative consolidation or advancement of the system of

social relations, within labour or society, by a preservation of the existing order. Finally, resolutions categorised under Reaction were perceived to imply a tendency towards the quantitative consolidation and advancement of the system of social relations, within labour and society, by subjugating through conflict other opposing social forces.

The perception of the praxial and symbolic elements for each resolution was first imposed by the general methodological perspective employed throughout this project, that is, Dialectical and Historical Materialism.

The resolutions were also classified accoording to five groups.(See Table 1). These groups were:

a)accepted and rejected resolutions, calculated on the basis of the total number of proposed resolutions (1176). The accepted resolutions represented 91% (1070) of the total, while the rejected resolutions represented 9% (106) of the total. It was therefore decided that only the accepted resolutions should be used for the purposes of this project.

b) Accepted resolutions that refer either to concerns of the AFL about society (756 or 70.7%), or about labour (314 or 29.3%).

c) Accepted resolutions proposed by the membership (702 or 65.6%), about the leadership (368 or 34.4%) of the AFL.

d) Accepted resolutions proposed by the national (550 or 51.4%), or by the international unions (152 or 14.2%).

e) Accepted resolutions proposed by the AFL executive council (227 or 21.2%), or by the District Labour Councils (DLC) (141 or 13.2%). This approach to the content analysis of the AFL resolutions is based on the premise that it will provide a fairly detailed "picture" of the culture of the AFL.

Final comments were made, based on the following considerations: 1. The synchronic performance and relationship of the categories of the AFL has demonstrated that, the question about, the political performance and relationship of the categories within each group and sub-group, on the basis of continuity-discontinuity, advancement-setback, and quantity-quality.

Finally, it is hoped that the content analysis of the AFL resolutions will allow the development of a broader and deeper understanding about the fluctuating and periodizing character of the AFL culture.

Results.

The results will be reported according to: first, their synchronic relationship, and second, their diachronic relationship.

Synchronic.

1. For the accepted resolutions, Critique has the highest percentage 32%, followed by Negation 27.2%, followed by Reaction 24.2%, followed by the category of Legitimation with 16.6% of the total. (Table 1)

2. From the accepted resolutions that refer to the concerns of the AFL about society, Critique has the highest representation with 22.9%, followed by Reaction with 22.1%, followed by Negation with 19.8%, and finally followed by Legitimation with 5.8%, from the total number of the sample. In the case of the accepted resolutions that refer to the concerns of the AFL about the labour movement, Legitimation has the highest percentage, that is, 10.7%, followed by Critique 9.2%, by negation 7.3%, and last by Reaction 2.2% (Table 1).

3. The accepted resolutions proposed by the membership of the AFL have as the most representative category Critique with 20.5%,followed by Negation 20.5%, followed by Reaction 17.9%, and by Legitimation 8.9% from the sample. As far as it concerns the concurred resolutions proposed by the leadership of the AFL, Critique is the category with the highest percentage representation, with 11.6% followed by Negation 8.7%, Legitimation 7.6%, and Reaction with 6.5%.(Table 1)

4. In the case of the accepted resolutions proposed by the national unions, Critique is first with 16.3%, followed by Negation 15.9%, by Reaction 13.7%, and by Legitimation 5.5%. For the international unions, 4.2% falls under Critique, 4.1% falls under Reaction, 3.4% under Legitimation, and 2.5% under Negation.(Table 1)

5. In the accepted resolutions proposed by the AFL executive counsil, 7.8% falls under Critique, 6.6% under Legitimation, 4.4% under Reaction, and 2.4% under Negation. Where, for the concurred resolutions proposed by the DLC, 6.3% falls under Negation, 3.8% under Critique, 2.1% under Reaction, and 1% under Legitimation.(Table 1)

Diachronic.

In the diachronic reporting of the results, three largely tentative stages were considered: 1979, the years with the highest and the lowest percentage representation of the categories, and 1986. The results of the diachronic relationship of the resolutions are presented in Table 2 and in Figure 1, and they follow the same group and sub-group division as the synchronic relationship.

The accepted reolutions, were considered on basis of their sample, as has already been reported, and not on the basis of the total number of the proposed resolutions. (See Table 2 and Figure 1) However, for a descriptive analysis of the total percentage of both the unaccepted and the accepted resolutions (calculated on the basis of the total number of the proposed, resolutions see Table 3 and Figures 2-3.) In 1979, Legitimation was the more representative category with a 3.6%,followed by Critique with 2.9%, followed by Negation with 1.5%, and then by Reaction with 1.3%. In 1983, Critique was up to 5.1%, followed by Negation 5%,Reaction 3.9,and then by Legitimation with 1.3%. In 1984, the peak reached its highest point with Critique 5.5%, Reaction with 5.3%, Negation had slightly dropped to 4.9% and Legitimation to 1.9%, from the total percentage of the resolution inthe sample. In 1986, though all categories except Reaction, thet in 1985 had dropped down to 1.8%, showed a declining tendency, with Critique down to 3.4%, followed by Negation with 3%, followed by Reaction with 2.5%, and finally followed by Legitimation with 1.2% from the total percentage in the sample.

Comments.

There are three overall observations that seem appropriate if all four forms of data analysis and presentation are considered. First, there is a well established tendency within the AFL culture, towards mobilisation and activation that reflects a certain degree of rebirth of the militancy and radicalization of the workers. Second, this tendency is characterised by its movement towards a qualitative evolution and development in the system of social relations within the labour movement as well as in society as a whole. These processes have been established by the AFL through confrontation and struggle rather than through consensus with its antagonists. And third, such a tendency is not evenly reflected, expressed and manifested by all the groups that participated in the AFL nor to all of its areas of concern.

Particularly, in the case of the synchronic analysis of the data, a relatively consistent pattern emerges in support of the tendency towards qualitative change, formed by the contribution of the resolutions proposed by the membership rather than the leadership, (see Table 5 and Figures 6-7) by the national rather than the international unions, (see Table 6 and Figures 8-9)and to some extent more by the District Labour Council (DLC), rather by the AFL. (See Table 7 and Figures 10-11)The area of concern seems to be the society as whole rather than the labour movement. (See Table 4 and Figures 4-5) The strongest support of this tendency is to be found in the content of the resolutions proposed by the DLC, where the focus of the struggle that effects the direction of the AFL's culture, is to be found in reaction.(See Table 7 and Figure 11)

The opposite tendency is to be found in the resolutions proposed by the Leadership, (see Table 5 and Figure 7) the International Unions (see Table 6 and Figure 9) and the AFL, (see Table 7 and Figure 10) and it was mostly concerned with the area of the labour movement.(See Table 4 and Figure 4) It can be characterized by the tendency towards the conservation of the labour movement as it is.

In terms of the diachronic analysis of the data, the uneven form of this tendency, towards the qualitative evolution and development of the system of social relations, within the labour movement and in society, becomes more evident. Further, a cultural rupture in 1983-

1984 from the past occured, in regards to the content of the resolutions in 1984, which shows important changes to have taken place in the way that the quality-quantity relationship has been reflected, expressed and manifested in the AFL'S culture during the 1979-1986 period.

Thus, in 1982, 1983, and 1984,Negation, Critique, and Reaction (with this sequence), have reached high levels, where Legitimation has dramatically declined. This tendency towards Negation is more evident in the resolutions concerned with the labour movement, (see Table 4 and Figure 4) largely been supported by the membership, (see Table 5 and Figure 6) and the National Unions. (See Table 6 and Figure 8) Critique for this period has been largely supported by the Leadership, (see Table 5 and Figure 7) where Reaction occurs in high levels for all sub-groups.

Before 1982, the pattern supports the argument that neither militancy or radicalism, or the tendency towards a qualitative evolution and development in labour movement and/or society was of much concern for the AFL. (See Table 2 and Figure 1) However, since 1983, and leading to 1986, as a result in the rupture with the previous years, the AFL changed qualitatively and perhaps temporarily the direction of its culture, despite the eventual drop of the actual number of resolutions, that by now (1986), have reached the same levels as in 1979 and 1980. (ibid.)

Thus, it seems possible that a qualitative change has occurred in the AFL's culture after 1983, and as a result of a continuous, yet uneven, built up of the various tendencies. These tendencies themselves, however, within the different cultural context of the AFL, and of the society as a whole, appear with different praxial and symbolic content. At the same time the cultural tendencies of Negation, Critique, Legitimation, and Reaction expressing particular forms of social relations and practices, continuously contribute to their self-transcendence in themselves or as a system.

Table 1 Total % of 1979-1986 resolutions, by group, by category.

Groups	Negation	Critique	Legitimation	Reaction	Total %	
	Categories					
No-concurrence	2.7	2	1.2	3	9	100%
Concurrence	24.7	29.2	15	22.2	91	
Labour	7.3	9.2	10.7	2.2	29.3	100%
Society	19.8	22.9	5.8	22.1	70.7	
Membership	18.1	20.5	8.9	17.9	65.6	100%
Leadership	8.7	11.6	7.6	6.5	34.4	
National	15.9	16.3	5.5	13.7	51.4	100%
International (Unions)	2.5	4.2	3.4	4.1	14.2	
AFL	2.4	7.8	6.6	4.4	21.2	
DLC	6.3	3.8	1	2.1	13.2	

Table 2

Percentage of the total number of the concurrence resolutions for the period of 1979 to 1986, by year by category.

Year	Negation	Critique	Legitimation	Reaction	Total %
	Categories				
1979	1.5	2.9	3.6	1.3	9.3
1980	2.1	3.6	3.2	2.1	11.0
1981	3.2	4.1	2.1	3.6	12.9
1982	3.9	3.6	1.3	3.7	12.5
1983	5.0	5.1	1.3	3.9	15.7
1984	4.9	5.5	1.9	5.3	17.6
1985	3.6	3.8	2.0	1.8	11.1
1986	3.0	3.4	1.2	2.5	10.0
					100.1

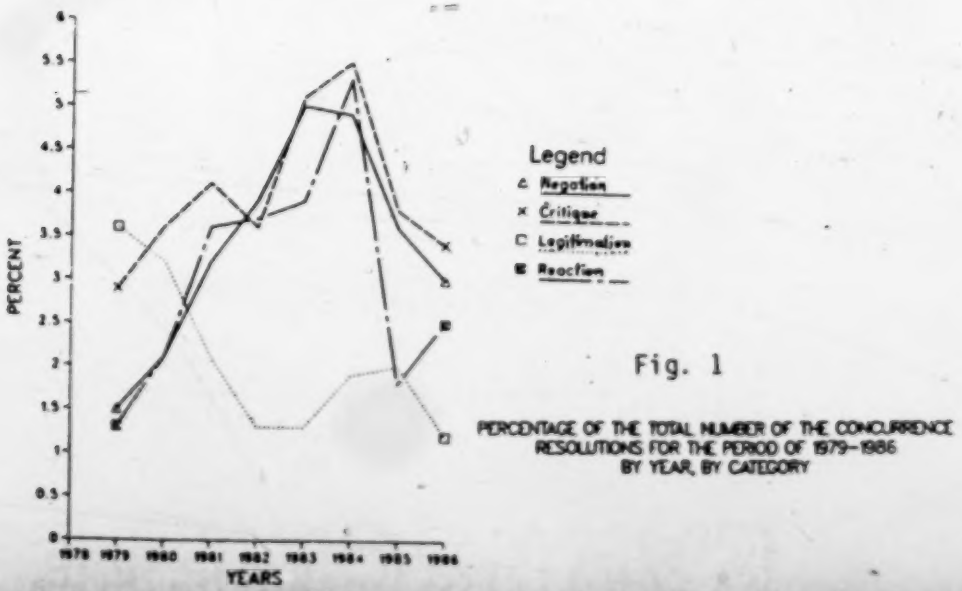


Fig. 1

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF THE CONCURRENCE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979-1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY

Table 3 Percentage of the total number of resolutions (concurrence and no-concurrence), for the period of 1979 to 1986, by year, by category.

	Categories									
	Negation		Critique		Legitimation		Reaction		Total %	
Year	C	N-C	C	N-C	C	N-C	C	N-C	C	N-C
1979	1.4	0.2	2.6	0.1	3.2	0.4	1.2	0.2	8.4	0.9
1980	1.9	0.9	3.3	1.2	2.9	0.2	1.9	0.2	9.9	2.6
1981	2.9	0.2	3.7	0.2	1.9	0.2	3.2	0.2	11.7	0.8
1982	3.6	0.6	3.2	0.3	1.9	0.1	3.4	0.4	11.4	1.4
1983	4.6	0.7	4.7	0.2	1.2	0.0	3.6	1.0	14.3	1.9
1984	4.4	0.2	2.5	0.2	1.7	0.1	4.8	0.4	16.0	0.9
1985	3.2	0.0	3.5	0.1	1.8	0.3	1.6	0.4	10.1	0.8
1986	2.7	0.0	3.1	0.0	1.1	0.0	2.3	0.1	9.1	0.1
									90.9%	9.4%

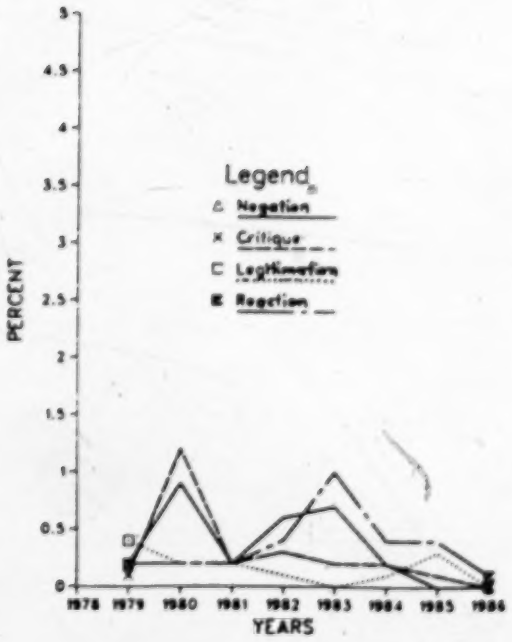


Fig. 2

PERCENTAGE OF NON-CONCURRED RESOLUTIONS OUT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979-1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY

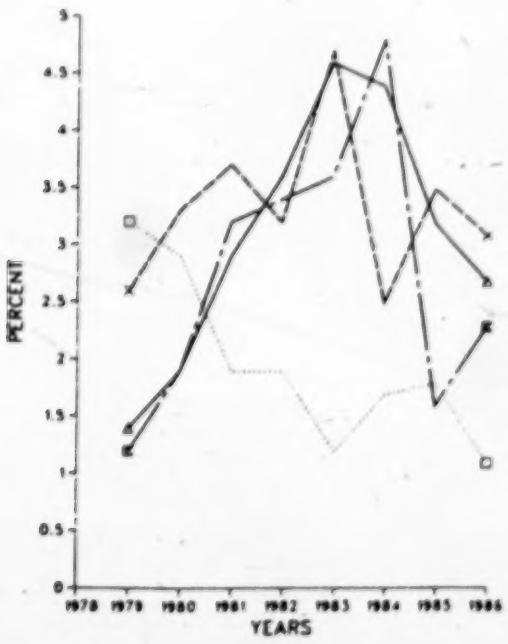


Fig. 3

PERCENTAGE OF CONCURRED RESOLUTIONS OUT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979-1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY

Table 4 Percentage of the total number of concurrence resolutions for the period of 1979 to 1986, by year, by category, for Labour and Society.

	Categories									
	Negation		Critique		Legitimation		Reaction		Total %	
Year	Labour	Society	Labour	Society	Labour	Society	Labour	Society	Labour	Society
1979	0.3	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.6	2.0	0.2	1.1	3.4	5.9
1980	0.4	1.6	1.0	2.4	2.4	0.7	0.2	1.1	4.1	6.8
1981	0.4	2.8	0.6	3.6	1.0	1.1	0.2	1.9	2.1	10.8
1982	1.0	2.9	0.7	2.9	1.0	0.3	0.2	3.4	3.0	9.5
1983	2.1	3.0	1.2	3.9	1.0	0.4	0.3	3.5	4.8	11.0
1984	1.1	3.7	1.6	3.9	1.5	0.4	0.4	5.0	4.6	13.0
1985	1.1	2.4	1.5	2.3	1.2	0.7	0.0	1.8	3.8	7.3
1986	0.8	2.1	1.3	2.1	1.0	0.2	0.4	2.0	3.6	6.4
									29.4	+70.7 = 100.1

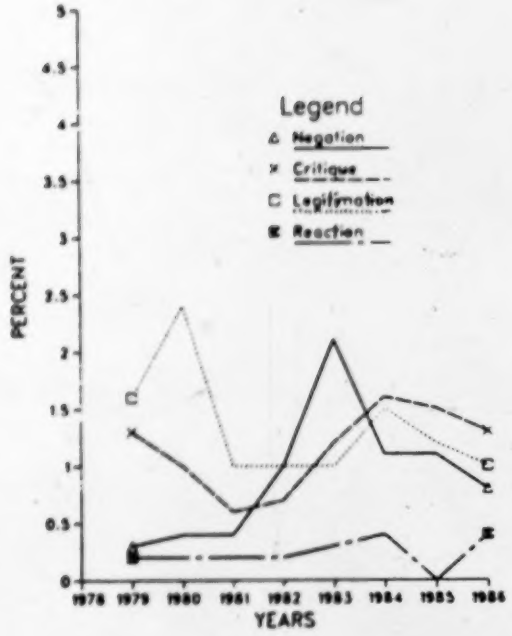


Fig. 4

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONCURRENCE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979–1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY, FOR LABOUR

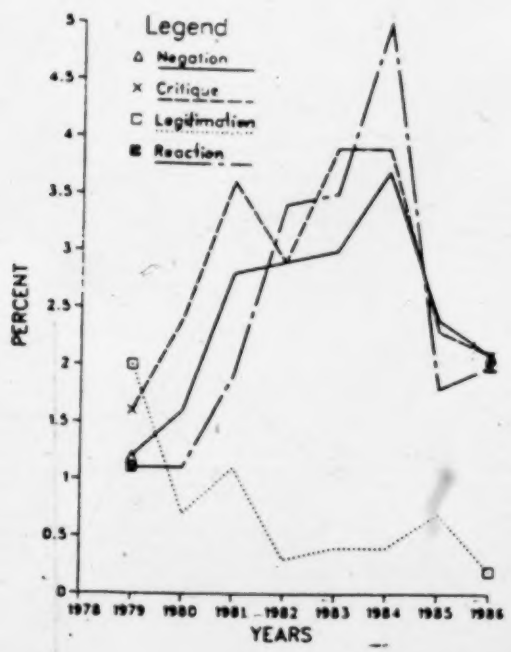


Fig. 5

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONCURRENCE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979–1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY, FOR SOCIETY

Table 5 Percentage of the total number of the concurrence resolutions for the period of 1979 to 1986, by year, by category, for the Membership (M), and Leadership (L) of the AFL.

	Categories									
	Negation		Critique		Legitimation		Reaction		Total %	
Year	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L
1979	1.1	0.4	2.1	0.7	2.8	0.7	1.1	0.2	7.2	2.1
1980	1.8	0.3	3.4	0.3	2.1	1.0	1.9	0.2	9.2	1.8
1981	2.2	1.0	2.5	1.6	1.0	1.0	2.7	0.8	8.5	4.4
1982	2.1	1.8	2.3	1.2	0.4	1.0	2.7	1.0	7.6	5.0
1983	4.8	0.3	3.5	1.7	0.5	0.8	3.8	0.4	12.5	3.2
1984	2.7	2.1	3.5	2.1	1.0	1.0	4.2	1.1	11.3	5.3
1985	1.9	1.7	1.7	2.1	1.0	1.0	0.5	1.3	5.0	6.1
1986	1.8	1.2	1.5	1.9	0.1	1.1	1.0	1.5	4.3	5.7

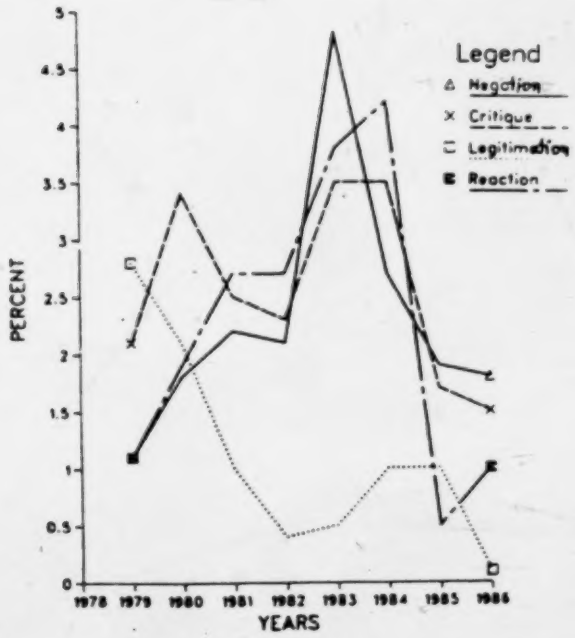


Fig. 6

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONCURRENCE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979–1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY, FOR MEMBERSHIP

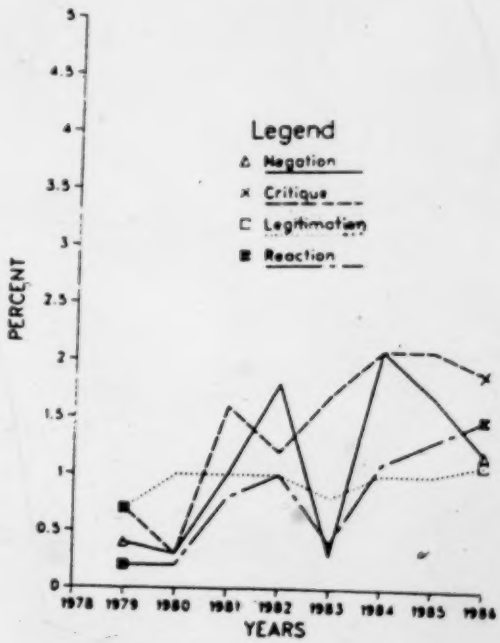


Fig. 7

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONCURRENCE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979–1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY, FOR LEADERSHIP

Table 6 Percentage of the total number of the concurrence resolutions for the period of 1979 to 1986, by year, by category, for the National (N) and International (I) Unions.

	Categories									
	Negation		Critique		Legitimation		Reaction		Total %	
Year	N	I	N	I	N	I	N	I	N	I
1979	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.2	0.7	1.9	0.2	1.0	2.3	4.9
1980	1.4	0.4	2.4	1.0	2.0	0.2	1.2	0.7	7.0	2.1
1981	1.7	0.6	1.3	1.2	0.4	0.7	1.8	1.0	5.8	3.4
1982	2.1	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.4	0.0	2.7	0.0	7.6	0.0
1983	4.1	0.7	3.4	0.1	0.5	0.0	3.8	0.0	11.8	0.7
1984	2.7	0.0	3.0	0.5	0.6	0.4	2.7	1.5	9.0	2.3
1985	1.6	0.3	1.4	0.3	1.0	0.1	0.5	0.0	4.4	0.7
1986	1.8	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.8	0.1	4.2	0.1

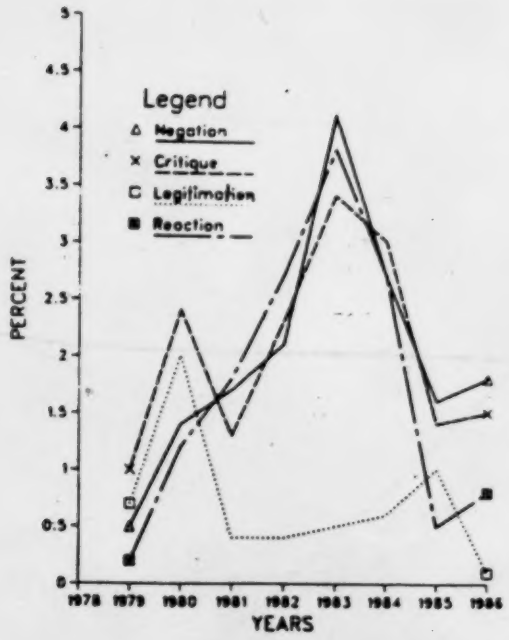


Fig. 8

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONCURRENCE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979–1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY, FOR THE NATIONAL UNIONS

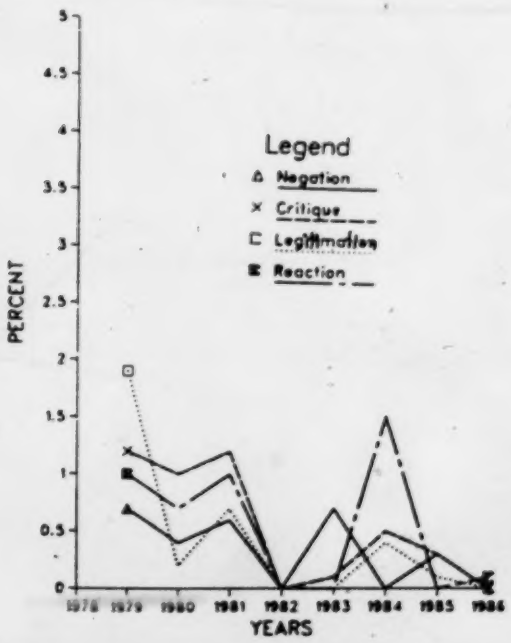


Fig. 9

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONCURRENCE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979–1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY, FOR THE INTERNATIONAL UNIONS

Table 7

Percentage of the total number of the concurrence resolutions for the period of 1979 to 1986, by year, by category, for the AFL and DLC.

	Categories									
	Negation		Critique		Legitimation		Reaction		Total %	
Year	AFL	DLC	AFL	DLC	AFL	DLC	AFL	DLC	AFL	DLC
1979	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.6	1.5
1980	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.1	1.0	0.8
1981	0.2	0.7	1.4	0.2	1.0	0.0	0.5	0.4	3.1	1.3
1982	0.1	1.7	0.3	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.8	0.2	2.1	2.8
1983	0.3	0.0	1.3	0.4	0.8	0.0	0.4	0.0	2.8	0.4
1984	1.0	1.1	1.7	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.7	0.4	3.6	1.7
1985	0.2	1.5	1.7	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	3.2	3.0
1986	0.7	0.6	1.2	0.7	1.1	0.0	1.1	0.4	4.1	1.6

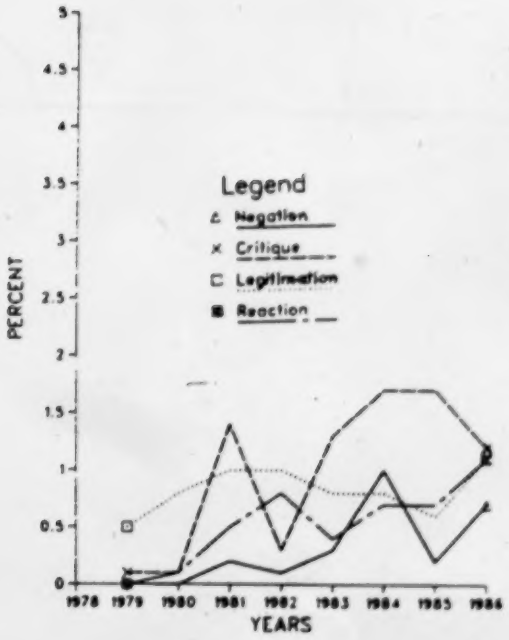


Fig. 10

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONCURRENCE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979–1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY, FOR AFL

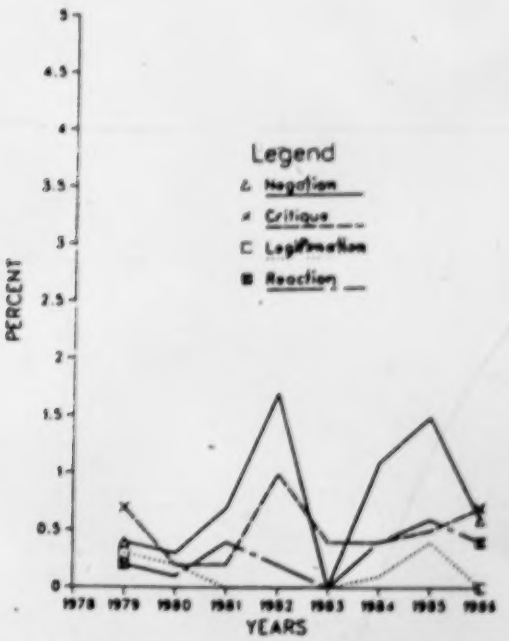


Fig. 11

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONCURRENCE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF 1979–1986 BY YEAR, BY CATEGORY, FOR DLC

APPENDIX B.

Fig.1 The Essential Mode of Culture.

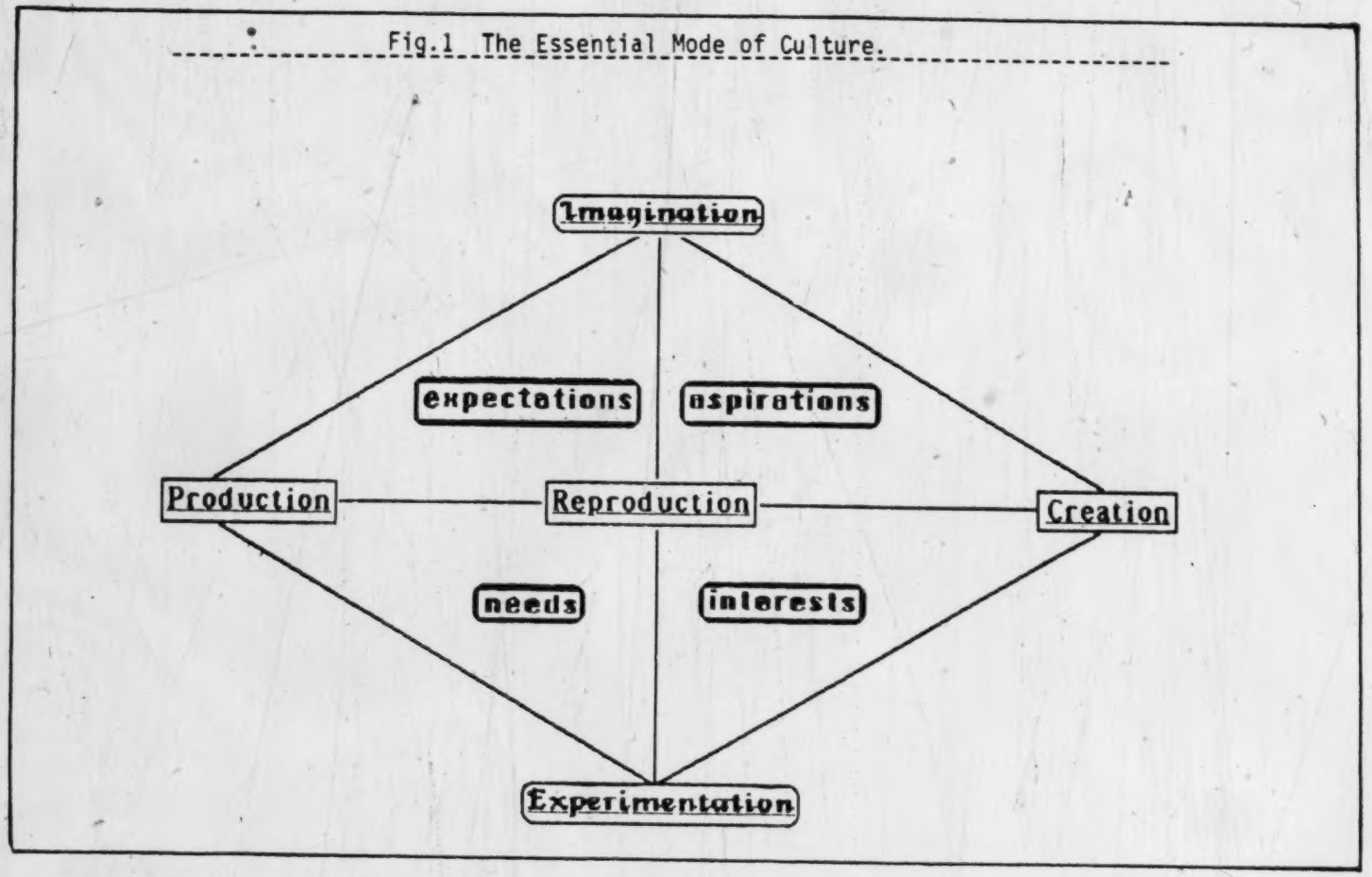
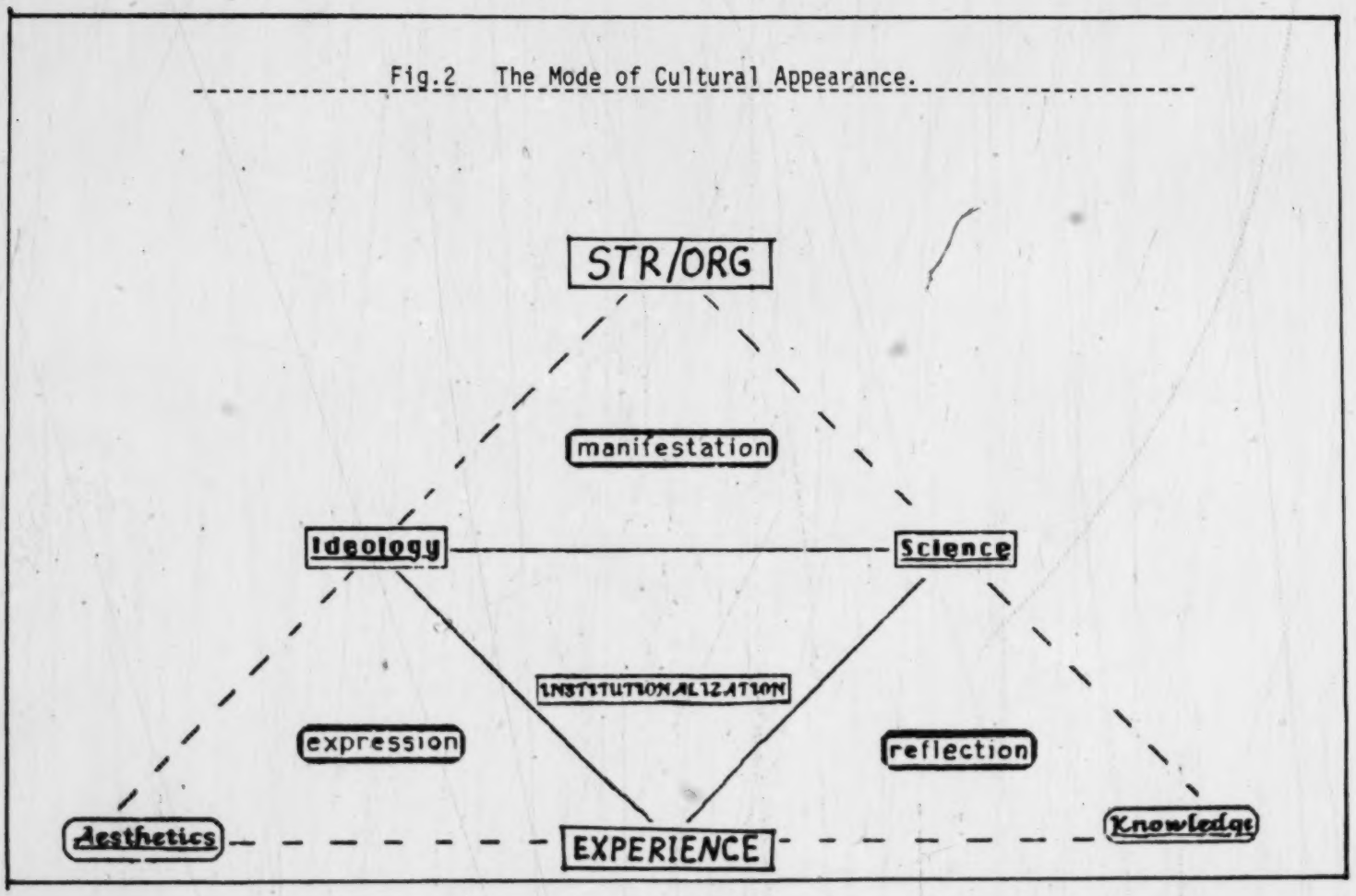


Fig.2 The Mode of Cultural Appearance.



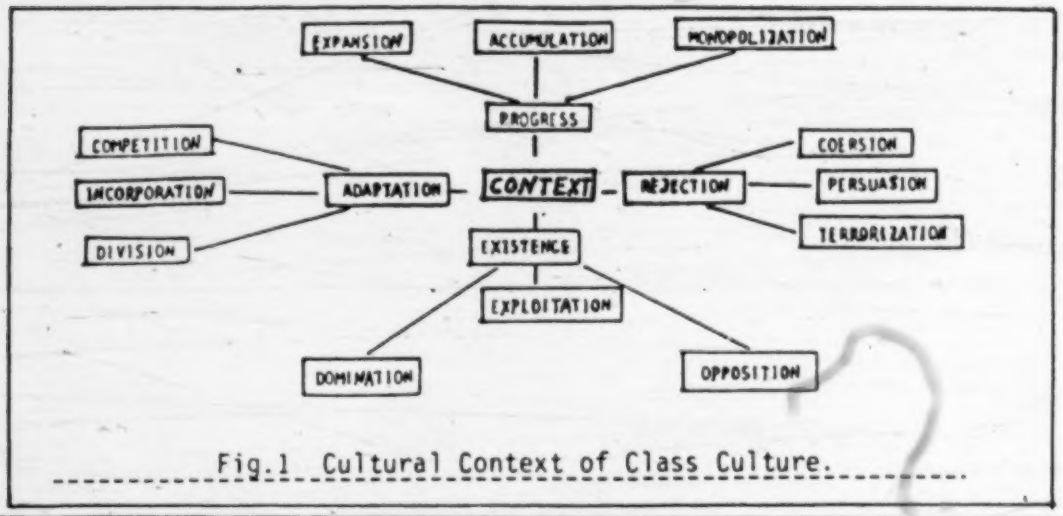


Fig.1 Cultural Context of Class Culture.

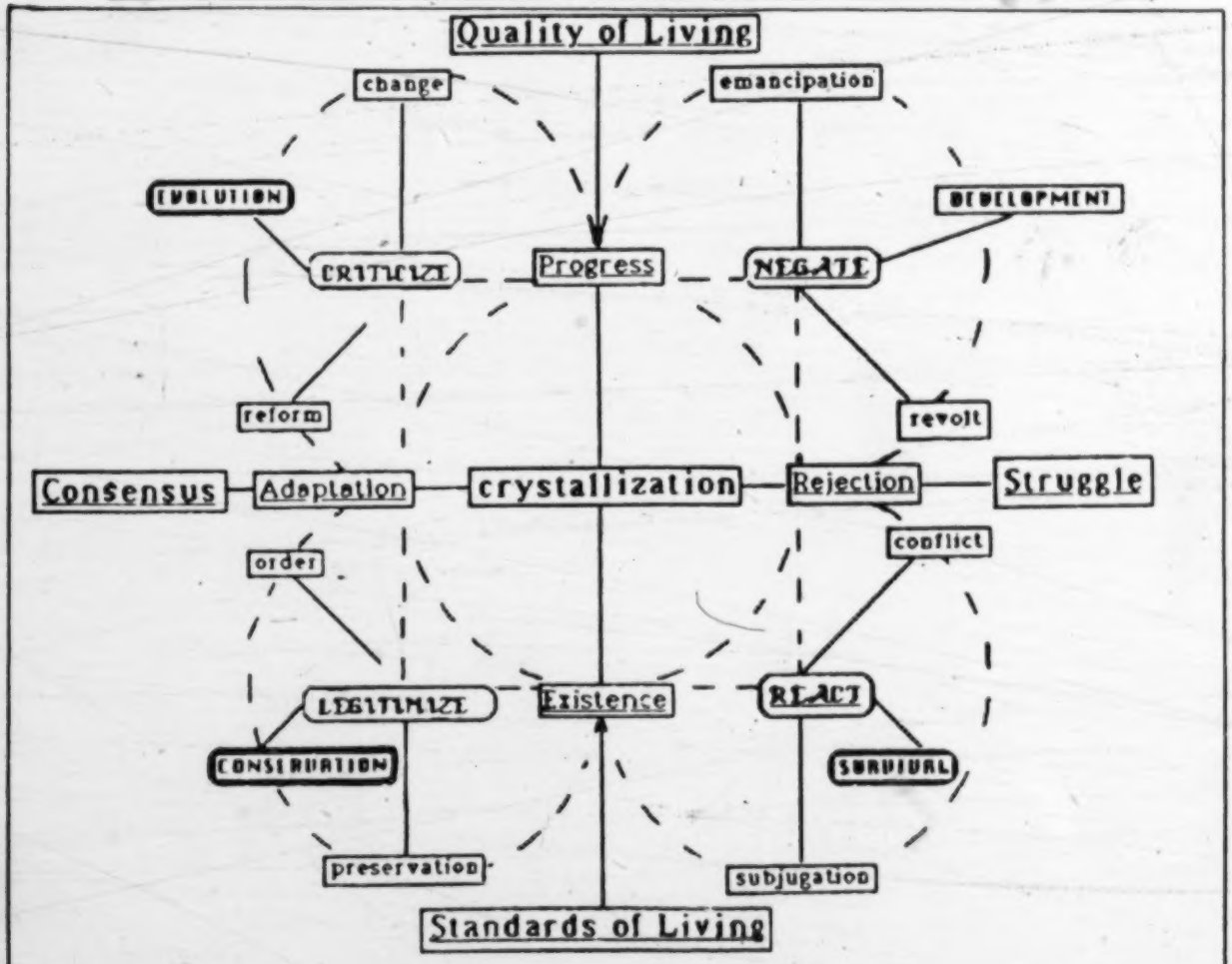
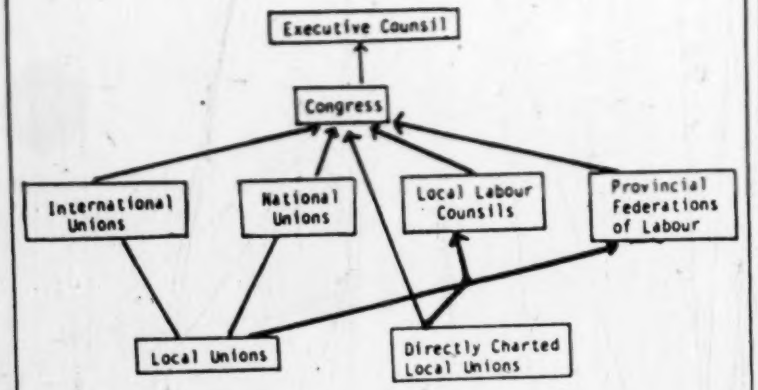


Fig.2 Content and Form of Class Culture.

APPENDIX D.

Fig.1 AFL Affiliation with the CLC.



From: White J. Women and Unions. Hull: Canadian Government Publishing Center, 1980: 82.

Fig.2 Structure of the AFL.

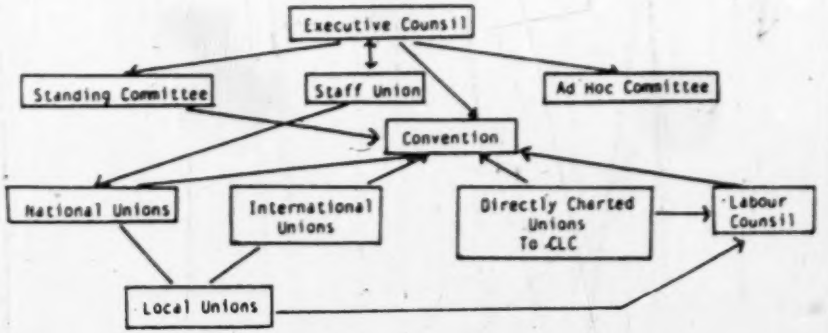


Table 1 Affiliates Representation in the AFL.

Year	No Affiliates	No Members	No Delegates	Representation
1979	305	113.000	805	1/140
1980	304	116.373	764	1/152
1981	301	122.251	853	1/143
1982	275	104.080	580	1/179
1983	287	103.045	631	1/163
1984	299	105.219	441	1/239
1985	256	98.742	622	1/159
1986	296	103.868	591	1/176